

Elementary English

MARCH, 1951

HUMAN RELATIONS AND
LANGUAGE ARTS

TESTING READING ABILITIES

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

WRITING PLAYS

LANGUAGE IN THE SCHOOL

MECHANICAL DEVICES

RESEARCH ON GRAMMAR

INTERPRETING LANGUAGE

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ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

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MARCH, 1951

No. 3

Human Relations Now

WALTER LOBAN¹

How Do We Use Language?

Language is an elusive and mysterious phenomenon: gurgling noises in people's throats setting up waves of sound that vibrate someone else's eardrums; strange marks on rocks and pieces of paper and neon signs in the sky; the vehicle for great poetry and for declarations of war.

If we want to know how language should be used in a democratic society, we must ask if it is used in some different fashion in non-democratic societies. In the kind of social organization we seek to build, is the use of language to differ in any significant way from other societies? How was language used in Germany under Hitler? How was it used in Russia under the Czars and how is it used in the Soviet Union under communism? How is it used among the primitive peoples who still inhabit parts of the globe?

The difference must lie primarily in two areas: the use of language for truth rather than falseness and the use of language for human understanding. Not only the dictatorships are guilty. We, too, because of our own imperfections have not

¹School of Education, University of California. This article is a digest of a paper delivered at the Milwaukee convention of The National Council of Teachers of English November 24, 1950.

always kept the stream of language clear, and when mortals cannot trust that words represent reality, whole nations may become mentally ill, just as individuals drift into chaos when they lose their hold upon reality. But what is an individual to do when the stream of language seems already badly polluted? It is this question I want to explore briefly with you now.

To do this, I will ask you to consider a relationship between three people, all of them real. One is Abraham Lincoln; another is a German named Hoess, the commandant of Auschwitz concentration camp. Colonel Hoess organized and directed the murder of two and one-half million people before he was captured by the American Army. The third person, Kathleen Farrell, taught the first grade in an American school in the period between the two world wars. What connection could there possibly be that might bring these three together—Abraham Lincoln, Rudolph Hoess, and Kathleen Farrell? Let us look more closely at them.

Lincoln and Hoess represent extremes on a scale of human kindness. All of you are familiar with Lincoln's letter to the mother whose five sons had died in battle. May we read it again to remind us of a classic example of sympathetic understand-

ing so great that the right words to comfort were found, even in a situation of almost unbearable sorrow. Here is the letter.

November 21, 1864

Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Madam: I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,
Abraham Lincoln

Now, let us look at the other end of the scale of human sensitivity. Colonel Rudolph Hoess was personally in charge of Auschwitz. According to official records, the prisoners "arrived in large train transports from all countries. These capable of working were sent to the labor details and the rest, including most women and all young children, were sent to the extermination chambers immediately. Children who were hidden under the dresses of their mothers to escape notice were torn from their mothers and sent to the gas chambers. Gold teeth and gold rings were extracted from the corpses after gassing and the melted gold was sent to the Economics Ministry. The women's hair was packed in bales for commercial uses."²

In answer to our questions as to how

²G. M. Gilbert, *Nuremburg Diary*. New York: Farrar, Strauss and Company, p. 209.

many people could be killed in an hour, Hoess explained:

"'.one must figure it on a daily 24-hour basis, and it was possible to exterminate up to 10,000 in one 24-hour period.' He explained that there were actually 6 extermination chambers. The 2 big ones could accommodate as many as 2,000 in each and the 4 smaller ones up to 1500, making a total capacity of 10,000 a day. We tried to figure out how this was done, but he corrected us. 'No, you don't figure it right. The killing itself took the least time. You could dispose of 2,000 head in a half hour, but it was the burning that took the time. The killing was easy; you didn't even need guards to drive them into the chambers; they went in expecting to take showers and, instead of water, we turned on poison gas. The whole thing went very quickly.' He related all of this in a quiet, apathetic, matter-of-fact tone of voice."³

There can be no doubt, therefore, about Hoess' behavior. Its inhumanity is evident, so overwhelmingly evident that the mind cannot fully apprehend the enormity of the behavior.

Now we come to Kathleen Farrell, first grade teacher. What does Miss Farrell have to do with Abraham Lincoln and Rudolph Hoess? One of Miss Farrell's students, now a grown woman, writes of this teacher in "The High Hill," a story that appeared in *Harper's* for February, 1948. Miss Farrell taught spelling and reading and penmanship. She also taught mercy and loyalty and understanding, and the account of how she did so is a brilliant case study in human relations.

³Gilbert, *ibid.*, p. 250.

Miss Farrell's approach to teaching was the direct opposite of German education under Nazi influence, an education that deliberately set out to diminish tolerance, sympathy, and social sensitivity. Education under the Nazis was a diabolically effective education, stimulating the traits that characterize a Colonel Hoess and stifling the human potentialities that point in the direction of the humanity of a man like Abraham Lincoln or Albert Schweitzer. What would be the result if teachers set out, as deliberately as the Nazis did, to INCREASE mercy and loyalty and understanding in the curriculum, to educate the heart as well as the mind? How would we do it? How would language be involved?

What Are the Important Goals?

First, I believe, we must reconsider our purposes and our content. Too many of us conceive of language study in terms of correct usage. Sometimes we teachers of English say, "Our pupils come from good homes and they haven't many language problems." Or we say, "These students use such bad language! It is all I can do to get them to say *isn't* for *ain't*." Seldom do we emphasize the more significant problems of language. Are the students gaining in power to differ with each other's ideas without rancor? Do they listen for *ideas* even though the speaker uses a manner of speech that is British, or Southern, or New England, or even broken English? Are my class discussions showing improvement in courtesy, mutual respect, and thoughtful attention to the feelings and dignity of everyone in the class? Are my pupils gaining the skill to retreat gracefully from an untenable position and to modify their ideas in the light of new evidence? Do

they feel a duty and obligation to express their point of view, even when it is unpopular, so that the democratic process has access to all sides of a question? Are they learning techniques of group discussion and efficient use of time? Are they learning to talk to pupils of other races and economic groups with a natural fellow feeling? Do they ever use language to put someone else at ease, cheer him up, or draw out his ideas? Are they learning to discard rigid dogmatic statements and replace them with what I like to call "a positive tentativeness"? Do they recognize when statements are backed by opinion rather than fact, and do they feel an obligation to cite sources and facts when those are pertinent?

These are some of the skills that must be added to concern with correctness of language. We should not be ashamed of what we tried to do in the past. Most teachers of English wanted their pupils to use a natural, unobtrusive English that would not prevent the pupils from acceptance in a varied social life. Our mistake was to conceive too narrowly the kinds of language skill needed in a democracy.

Insights through Literature

Literature is another avenue that offers us insight into the feelings and thoughts of other human beings, and because it offers us this *living* quality, literature will always be an important aid in helping us to understand other people—and because understanding other people is so crucial a need for all human beings, literature *used for that end* will always have a central place in democratic education. It is only when we hobble literature

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Testing Reading With a Book

E. W. DOLCH¹

It is often impossible or inconvenient to test a student's reading with the usual reading test. One may not have the test handy; or he may want to keep an informal relation with the student which would be changed if a formal reading test were given. In such a case, it is possible to test a student's reading by using an ordinary book. In addition, this book test may give information that the reading test cannot give. Any person can thus "test reading with a book," as we shall see from the following description.

This method of testing is especially recommended for guidance interviews where the time is short and where the self-confidence of the student must be maintained. In such an interview, the subject of poor reading often comes up. The advisor can easily say, "Well, let's see how the reading goes," and pull out a book and hand it to the student. Books from different subjects and levels can be easily at hand. The advisor just says, "Let's read a little in this," and the test begins without the student realizing that there is any testing going on.

In most cases, the book to use for testing reading may be any one of the regular textbooks the student is using, so long as it contains continuous text. When a student is very poor indeed in reading, as will probably be known by reputation or by his own statement, it may be advisable to hand him a relatively easy reading book. That is, a very poor sixth grader

may be given a fourth grade book. A very poor ninth grader can be handed a sixth grade book. The book does not need to be very easy for him to read. It just must not be so hard that he can do nothing at all with it.

First step. The first thing to do is to have the student open to a part he has not read and read aloud to you. As he does so, he will come to words he does not recognize. "Feed" him these words instantly; that is, say the word the instant he hesitates. Do so easily and without comment. Have him read a paragraph or so in this way.

The purpose of this step is to discover whether the student knows the common words that are found in all reading matter. You can tell this by watching carefully the kind of words you have to tell. Are they such common words as "very," "therefore," "because," and the like? Or are they the unusual, hard words that are not often met with? If the unknown words are common ones, then the student needs one kind of treatment; if they are the uncommon, "hard" words, then he needs another.

Step Two. After the reading aloud is finished, ask the student to close the book and tell you as much as he can of what he has read. If he has difficulty, tell him that just any idea will do. If he gives one idea, praise him and ask "what else?" Try to

¹Professor of Education, the University of Illinois. Professor Dolch is author of numerous books on the teaching of reading.

keep him from becoming excited or disturbed. Give him time.

The purpose of this step is to discover whether the student has the habit of comprehending as he reads, or whether he just "reads" with little or no comprehension. The way he reads aloud cannot be relied upon. Some students read smoothly and can tell you little of what they read. Others stumble along and still can tell you practically everything. The individual's intelligence has something to do with this, but also there is a habit of comprehending which some students do not have. Of course, if the material was very hard, and you had to tell too many words, little comprehension can be expected. In that case, try an easier book.

Step Three. Now have the book opened and the next section read to you aloud. This time, *do not tell the words*. When the student stops, tell him to skip the words and read on to the end of the sentence. Then ask him what he thinks the missing word is? Tell the word only after the student has tried his best to get it from the context.

This step is to find out how much the student can help himself with unknown words by using context. In the reading in most school subjects there are always new and unknown words. Students will not go to the dictionary for every unknown word. There are too many of them. Do they or do they not use context to get the meaning of unknown words?

Note particularly whether the student guesses a word that fits into the thought even though it may not be the exact word in the text. If some word that really fits is

thought of, then the sentence could be read with some meaning. If no word at all can be thought of, the sentence has a "hole" and may or may not mean something.

Step Four. Have the student read on through another section, and this time, do not tell the unknown words, but try to find out if the student has any method of word attack. *First*, ask him how the new word starts. If he gives the name of the letter, ask him the sound of that letter. If he can tell it, ask him to sound the next letter. That is, find out if he is using or can use the letter by letter method of sounding of new words. It may be that he has not used it so far, but that he can use it if he tries. So this time, definitely ask him to try to sound the words letter by letter to see how much of that kind of sounding knowledge he has. Of course he may not sound the words correctly; so you will ask him to guess after he has made a beginning. If he cannot guess, tell him the word and go on.

Second, now try to see if the student can attack a new word by word-parts. Ask him if he sees any familiar part in the word. He may see a prefix or a suffix. If he sees the prefix, ask him what is the next part. The student will probably have no systematic method of dividing a word into syllables but he may have a rough-and-ready way of grouping letters and sounding the groups he makes. Again, the student in his reading may not have used this method, but the question is, can he use it if he tries? Poor readers often have considerable knowledge of word attack that they never use unless pressed to do so.

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Experiences in Speaking

DOROTHEA FRY¹

There seems to be a rumor that teachers are opposed to children's talking in their classrooms; perhaps there are a very few places where that is true. A little boy once said, "Teachers are the people who look around and glare at you if you whisper. You can always find out who the teachers are, in church or anywhere, if you whisper just once. They'll always turn around to find out *who's talking!*"

And there is the not very funny but increasingly well known story of the little fellow who went to school for his first day and returned home so glum and dispirited that his mother and father were really concerned, and tried to find out why he seemed unhappy. They asked if he liked school. "No, sir!" he answered. "And I'm not gonna like it. I can't read, and I can't write, and now they won't let me talk!"

Now if there is any foundation for such stories, if the rumor has any substantial basis in fact, we'd better do something constructive to improve the situation. Why? Because speaking is in some ways the most important means of communication we have.

When we use the term *speaking*, I take it we mean communication, and two-way communication at that; we mean that the speaker's purpose is not exhibition, or time-killing, but to make what he says effective in the thinking, feeling, and action of someone else. That means speaking-listening-response, so closely associated that I find it hard to stick to my own topic

and not encroach upon that of the next speaker.

In this sense, speech is a distinguishing feature and characteristic of our very humanness. You will recall that the Harvard Report on *General Education in a Free Society* contains the flat statement that "Speech comes before reading and writing, and should keep this priority."² Yet there is a rumor that children are not supposed to talk, in school.

Speech contributes in important ways to basic reading competencies. Doctor William S. Gray has said that "Of large importance in efficient reading is the ability to pronounce the words of a passage."³ How in the world will the young reader pronounce the words he must read if he has little or no opportunity for speaking them? Yet there is a rumor. . .

Ralph Preston writes that the new agencies of communication, with all their emphasis on the spoken rather than the written word, are often thought of as harmful competition for reading; but evidence shows, he says, that these media give it substantial encouragement.⁴

¹John Muir College, Pasadena, California. This paper was read before the National Council of Teachers of English, Milwaukee, Nov. 25, 1950.

²Report of the Harvard Committee, *General Education in A Free Society*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946.

³William S. Gray (Ed.), *Reading in An Age of Mass Communication*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949. See especially pp. 58-74.

⁴*Ibid.*, p. 4

Yet the surface, practical, immediate values of communication as developed through speaking are not at all the only ones. For each individual human being, communication is a most vital part of life and growth. The isolate never develops normally and fully. Child psychologists with their many excellent and thorough studies have given us insights into how social behavior develops in small children; they make very clear the critical importance of early experiences as foundation for later growth. Doctor Mildred Peters of Wayne University has said that "If we don't like to be with people, there was something wrong with our first relationships with them." Add to your own experience with young children the beautifully reported *Biography of a Baby*, by Millicent Shim, and the more recent *Biographies of Child Development*, by Arnold Gesell, to say nothing of the sociological studies of unwanted children, kept away from contact with other persons to protect family pride. Read the fascinating history of *The Wild Boy of Aveyron* and other children who were separated from human beings at an early age; they somehow survived for a time, but hardly as creatures who could be called human. Gessell's study of Rose, and of Sarah, who were both language problems at two and a half years of age or thereabouts, makes clear that social and emotional factors were highly significant in their later growth in speech facility. So it is with us all: we are both individuals, and social beings; cut us off from other people,—speech-wise,—and we fail to develop well as individuals. Yet there is a rumor. . .

In classrooms I have seen children who were with others, yet apart; their "growing up" suffered, and not only at the time, for many years later the scars still showed. The mischievous small boy, lips tightly clamped together, shown in a recent automobile advertisement writing on his classroom blackboard the words, "I'll be quiet as a Ford, I'll be quiet as a Ford, I'll be quiet as a Ford," will probably not be hurt one whit. Perhaps the exercise may be good for him, though I doubt it. But I have seen and worked with many a high school and junior college student who have suffered severe blockage from what you could only call speech suppression several hours a day, five days a week, through their school years. These have done what everybody else does against frustrations: some have retreated into themselves and forever after found it hard to come out again into the main stream of life and activity. Some have become unduly aggressive—you know the story of the child who found his first days of arithmetic experience difficult, to the point of failure. Coincidentally his behavior deteriorated to the point where the teacher talked with him and with his mother about it. Finally he confessed, "Well, if I can't be the best boy in the room, I'm just gonna be the worst!" Withdrawal and aggression are two ways of adjusting to frustration; the third way is, of course, learning how to cope with one's own problems of communication in practical fashion, day by day. When teachers are skilful and understanding, not too crowded by too many children all needing attention, not frustrated by rigidity in themselves or in their school situations, they can free children

from blockage and at the same time guide their tremendous energies into constructive channels. Children need not grow into people like the ones I've often worked with, people whose eyes have a look that speaks Housman's words:

The laws of God, the laws of man,
He may keep that will and can,
not I. . .
I, a stranger and afraid,
In a world I never made.

I've seen that look all too many times. Yet there is a rumor that teachers don't like children talking in school.

Now what can a teacher do about speaking? She—or he—can do these things:

1. The teacher can organize the work in the classroom so that *all* the children have many opportunities for purposeful speaking, not idle chatter. That means children planning with the teacher, then carrying out and evaluating projects in cooperation. That means the use of small groups within the larger classroom group, a modern version of the little red school-house which permits and encourages growth in sensitiveness to the rest of the group, which develops responsiveness, and both individual and group discipline. It means a real social studies program, active and not just verbal. John Michaelis' new book, *Social Studies for Children in a Democracy*, suggests excellent communication techniques for such a program.

A teacher can utilize a great deal of so-called "dramatic play"—which is not play at all, but a child's way of learning about the whole business of doing the things other human beings do, especially adults.

A teacher can help children dramatize situations of conflict in the group, with roles reversed or played by other children. Such dramatizations may very well open up a world otherwise unknown to a child whose experience with other children has been limited. This whole field of socio-drama, with its possibilities for growth in insight and understanding, to say nothing of therapy by dramatic experience, is one for study and adaptation by teachers to meet the practical demands of how to get Johnny and Jimmy and Mary and Susan to understand and get along with each other, first as children and later as citizens in this troubled and confused and unhappy world.

2. The teachers can understand and analyse their own procedures in a classroom better than most of us do. Miriam Wilt's study of listening⁵ included an inquiry into what teachers thought was going on in their classrooms as contrasted with what actually happened. Her results were a revelation. She questioned teachers in some forty-six states as to the relative importance of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Then with a stopwatch in hand she made careful observation of how school time was used in the classrooms of three cities. The teachers's judgments were strikingly at variance with reality. Just two examples: teachers who said they considered reading of first importance in learning were actually spending as much as seventy-three percent of the classroom time talking, and expecting the children *to listen to them*. And where teacher-ques-

⁵Miriam E. Wilt, "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening as A Factor in Elementary Education," *Journal of Educational Research*, XLIII (April, 1950), 626-636.

tion pupil-answer type discussions were carried on, teachers' questions often took more time than children's answers. Now how much chance is there, in such a situation, for a child to learn from speaking with his peers?

Further, many teachers need to free themselves from the load of guilt we sometimes carry when our classrooms are not very quiet places. Here's where the supervisor and principal need to come into the picture: they must help teachers—and especially patrons—understand why they do *not* "like a nice quiet room!" Cemeteries are nice, quiet places, too; but schoolrooms are not cemeteries, and sounds that make sense are not noise. A live learning situation is not necessarily silent.

Teachers need to observe and analyze themselves, to answer these questions: "What speech patterns are the children learning from me? How does my voice sound to them? How does that voice affect them nervously?"—because it does, of course! Every teacher should hear her own voice, often, as it sounds when she does not know it is being recorded.

In this all to brief time, we have tried to say these things:

1. Speech is important as a communicative skill.
2. Speech contributes to efficient reading and learning.
3. Speech contributes significantly to personal-social development.
4. Teachers and supervisors and principals should do more to facilitate speech in the classroom—not as an isolated exercise, but, as Gesell says, "in dynamic rela-

tionship to the total developmental history of the individual" in school and out

The rumor I spoke of at the beginning simply ought not to be true anywhere!

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Experiences In Listening

ALTHEA BEERY¹

"They have eyes and see not; ears have they, yet they hear not."

What have been your own recent adventures in listening? Were they exalting, sobering, instructive, or were they adventures in understanding? Assuming that you really heard in a language sense, i. e., took in and understood the ideas expressed, *why* did you listen? What purposes did you have? Did the purposes influence or control your "listening level"? What proof have you that you received the speaker's message? As you compared notes with a fellow listener, you may have been struck with the fact that in effect the two of you had listened to quite different speeches.

What "got in the way" of the speaker's attempt to communicate with you? Perhaps it was lack of background on your part, or *you* yourself with the worry and tensions of every day living, perhaps your attitudes and mind set. Which were communicated more faithfully, the facts presented or the general point of view? What effect on your listening had the environment—the temperature of the room, the comfort of the chair, the tightness of your shoes, your feeling of rapport with speaker and the audience? Possibly discussing the shared experience clarified it for you. Did you listen more profitably in situations in which you had a chance to exchange ideas with the speaker?

In light of the present lack of scientific evidence of what is involved psychologically in listening and of how listening

may be improved in children, these queries suggest that you may get some insight into procedures for your classroom as you analyze the factors which condition the effectiveness of your own listening.

How aware as a teacher are you of the listening habits of your children? How much of the time in school is spent in listening? The evidence from the Wilt study² is—"Far more than teachers think." Perhaps that last question should be rephrased—How much of the school day are children supposed to be listening? We can control how children sit and what they look at in the classroom more easily than what they hear, for listening is essentially an intellectual pursuit.

To *what* do your children listen in school? Dr. Wilt's study indicates that they listen chiefly to *you*!

Teachers who have studied the listening habits of children in their classrooms assert that it is helpful. A colleague of mine is working with cadets who are engaged in their first year of teaching under supervision and who attend a weekly practicum conference. Beset with the usual problems of neophytes in directing classroom activities, the group decided to ana-

¹Primary Supervisor, Cincinnati Public Schools. This talk was delivered at the Elementary Section Meeting, National Council of Teachers of English, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, November 25, 1950.

²Miriam E. Wilt, "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening and the Factor in Elementary Education," Doctoral Dissertation, Pennsylvania State College.

lyze the situations in which listening was expected of children, to whom and to what they listened, under what conditions, for what purposes, after what preparation. The teachers reported that the classroom situation improved as they gained more insight into the listening climate in their classrooms.

A group of Cincinnati teachers have been meeting on Saturdays with a skilled leader in group dynamics from the State University. As their knowledge of the role of participants and leaders in a group has increased, there has come the realization that a group cannot achieve its goals unless individuals in the group actively listen to each other, with respect for each person and his expression of ideas, although there may be basic disagreement with the ideas themselves.

A moment's consideration of language arts as communication, as a powerful means of developing citizens willing to face facts and act upon them, ready to work together in a common cause, will convince thoughtful teachers that more of children's listening time should be spent listening to their peers. This is especially true in the elementary school where learning to get along with each other is an important developmental task.

May we be forgiven, but if we are honest, we must admit that in all too many classrooms, for all too much of their time, children listen all too often to a teacher who speaks with the voice of authority in a way that stifles inquiry and investigation. If the teacher in the next classroom counters the suggestion that children spend more time listening to their peers with the remark, "But children's reports

are so boring," you may assure her that the remedy is not to be found in the teacher's report but in the relevance of the child's report to the group's purposes.

If it is fruitful for a teacher to analyze her own listening and the listening habits of her children, might it not also be profitable for children to analyze their own listening habits?

It is healthy, it seems to me, for children as well as adults to recognize how faulty their listening habits are. To point this up dramatically, the three frame film strip "Rumor Clinic"³ developed by Dr. Gordon Allport has been used successfully with older children in the elementary school as well as with high school pupils. After five or six children have been selected and all but one of those selected have left the room, picture one is shown to the group. The first child views the picture with the class. When the picture is removed, the second child is recalled, and the first child reports to him what the picture was about. The second reports to the third, the third to the fourth, and so on. The picture is flashed back on and the class then analyzes why the last child's report differs so much from the picture.

With a recording to play back, a more careful analysis can be made of the point at which various errors crept in. The narrators apparently are quite willing to analyze with the group what threw them off the track, how prejudices crept in, and how the same words meant different things to different people. Some of their comments were:

I listened but I didn't pay attention.

I heard what I wanted to hear.

³Put out by Anti-Defamation League, 212 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, New York.

What's really important may not seem that way to someone else.

Some memories of other things get in the way.

I always wondered how stories could get so twisted.

This opened my eyes to a number of things I never thought of before.

It is a very revealing listening experience for children.

One of the teachers in the group dynamics study mentioned earlier has been successful in leading his class of sixth graders to study themselves as a group and, as always with social interaction, they have found themselves concerned with problems of listening to each other.

At this point you may be saying to yourself, "A talk on listening without a mention of radio or television!" Purposely in such a brief discussion, the topic has been held chiefly to face-to-face relationships. The radio does not *materially* change the listening situation. Part of its magic has been that it creates the feeling that the voice on the air is speaking directly to the listener. Radio drama apparently can create the illusion of reality as easily as the drama on stage or television.

Television, recordings, radio are merely the media of communication. Television, it is true, leads to a closer coupling of listening with observing. Whether it be through listening, observing, reading, tasting, touching—the world and people impinge upon us, and because we are living, reacting humans, we sort and classify and unify impressions and ideas and give them back to others.

In some ways the separation of this topic from that of the previous speaker on

speaking is an artificial one. When learning is at its best, children read or write or speak or listen in terms of their communication needs and in the light of their purposes. The next time you say to your class, "Listen," assume that that big boy muttering under his breath is really saying "Why?", and soberly ask yourself about the listening climate in your classroom.

Go much deeper than comfortable chairs and fresh air. Dig deep to the bedrock of children's purposes, of the free flow of ideas not only from front to back but from side to side in your classroom, down to a consideration of the level of inquiry, to the honesty of the quest for truth, down to the touch stone of individual self-respect and mutual respect.

In these few remarks you have been urged to chart your listening inquiry in four major areas:

1. a frank analysis of your own listening experience,
2. a thoughtful study of the listening situation for children in your classroom,
3. a development in children of concern for their own listening competence, and finally
4. a refocusing of the problem in its relation to communication, with listening playing its essential role—not as a value in itself but as a means to the more effective meeting of minds.

May I wish you and your children many rewarding experiences in listening!

Our Own Plays: An Experience in Creative Writing

ELIZABETH DUDLEY FERRY¹

For several successive years the third grade children presented an original play, for their spring assembly program. Of course, all their plays are original in that they develop the play from the story, but these plays were entirely original, plot and all. They ran about twenty minutes, and usually included a few original songs and dances.

The foundation which made these experiences possible was the writing and playing of individual stories all through the year. Stories of just a few sentences, which took only seconds to play, were received with interest by the group and played with enthusiasm.

Good ideas came first in importance at writing time, form second. Until a child was writing a story of several sentences with some ease, form was not mentioned, and then group work seemed very helpful. As a story was read aloud, the group told where to find a good place to stop for breath. This helped the children to be more conscious of the need for periods, which are as much punctuation as should be expected at this age level.

At this stage, when ideas run far ahead of ability to record them, prompt help with spelling is necessary. The suggestion "just write it as it sounds and we'll fix it later," may prove workable, but too often the result is not decipherable to the teacher, and the child quickly forgets what he meant to say. On the other hand, creative enthusiasm can be dampened and even put

out entirely by the setting of too high standards. A primary teacher was heard to remark that she never allowed a child to write two sentences until he could write one with perfect spelling and punctuation. When asked if she did not sometimes find a child who had more to say than he could put into one sentence, she said that she never had that trouble. Between such an unhappy development and the equally devastating discouragement of being unable to record anything because of the need for more prompt help, there must be a happy medium.

In meeting this need, little indexed address books proved a boon. A word written for a child in his own "dictionary" was easy for him to copy. Soon he found that he could save time by having the book open at the right beginning letter. Soon, too, he found that the word he needed might already be there from a previous writing time. After some time of using these, many of the children went easily into the use of a beginning dictionary. It seemed a much more helpful method than copying words from the board.

We found that creative enthusiasm ran highest when a large block of time was allowed for writing, since the eight-year-old still writes laboriously. Therefore

¹A teacher in North Kansas City, Mo. The experiences described in this article occurred when the writer was a critic teacher in the third grade at Milwaukee State Teachers College.

we planned a long writing time every day for a week or so, and then let the whole thing rest for days or even weeks, until popular demand put it back on the day's schedule.

Just before each writing session, the group gathered to hear a few of each other's stories, and to play them. Every child had his chance here; it was not just a choosing of the best stories. In fact, it was the less imaginative child who most needed this opportunity. At first many stories bore a marked resemblance to current offerings of radio, movies, and comic books. However, when this was brought to the attention of the group, the children themselves became very alert to spot the tendency in each other's stories, and it soon ceased to be a major problem. The children showed steady growth in creative imagination in the playing of the stories as well as in writing them. As skill in creating plots grew, so did enthusiasm for writing. Less help was necessary in getting started, and stories grew longer and more interesting. It was gratifying to watch the growth of self-criticism, the increasing satisfaction the children gained from their own stories.

After months of individual story writing, the development of a longer group story served as a delightful climax. Invariably it was a fairy story, which eight-year-olds still love. One year the fairy idea was scornfully rejected in favor of a story that could really happen, but the tale had hardly started to unfold when fairies and elves appeared as important characters, and not one child objected.

The class story became very thoroughly a group undertaking, with all children

eagerly participating. They did not write any of the group story, which was always much too long and difficult for their level of writing skill. Their ideas were taken down for them, and when these were woven together sufficiently to make a scene, the group played it over and further suggestions were made. Often we put it away for days at a time. When it was tackled again, ideas seemed to have had a chance to "jell" and it moved ahead much faster than when we tried to hurry it along.

Each time a scene was played, new actors were chosen. In this way every child had a part in making up the conversation as well as the plot. To be sure, it was never played twice in the same way, but a particularly apt playing of a scene did set a certain general pattern. Rehearsals of the finished play, clear through, were few, and the choice of the characters for the assembly presentation was made only a day or two before the event, so it was carried off with spontaneous enthusiasm that never lagged.

Scenery and costumes were only suggestive of the scene or the character. Little children may be very disappointed and frustrated if they are not allowed any of these frills for such a special event, but emphasis on them is more time consuming and nerve wracking than is wise or necessary. These children painted just enough scenery to tack on a screen which was set in the center of the stage. This satisfied them, and also served to keep them towards the front of the stage where their voices carried better. Costumes were just a touch here and there, a crown for the princess, a feather in the hair and a daub

of paint on the face for an Indian, and so on.

Whenever a song seemed necessary to the play, the group worked out the words together and the music teacher helped them set it to music.

As the play was given in the assembly it was taken down in shorthand, typed, and put into the class scrapbook. Reading it over, taking different parts, was a favorite reading activity for a long time afterwards.

HUMAN RELATIONS NOW

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by teaching it exclusively as technique and form or restrict it to service in such social studies topics as "Transportation" or "Slum Clearance" that literature begins to sicken and dwindle until eventually some near-sighted curriculum committee prunes it from the course of study. But hobbled, restricted, subordinated, sickening and dwindling, *or even pruned*, literature will always have to be revived and brought back into the curriculum, for no other study will satisfy our need to put knowledge into relation with our emotions and our search for enough beauty to make life worth living.

The Task before Us

If teachers of English believe as Miss Farrell did, that education is also in the heart, they will seek and find ways to use language and literature to teach human relations and the search for truth. The

warmth of the teacher's personality will be a tremendously important factor in a curriculum that lifts pupils in the direction of Lincoln and away from the depths of Colonel Hoess.

At the beginning of this paper we asked what individuals could do when the times seemed adverse to their hopes. We can, I believe, do one thing that men of good will have always done. We can set our course against the stream and do what we *can* do, small though it may seem. In all our dealings with students and fellow teachers we can practice human relations now, this moment.

There's more to teaching than arithmetic and spelling, Miss Farrell said. "*Mercy and loyalty and understanding We learned*," she said, "we weren't born knowing, any more than these children. Now it's our turn to teach."

Content in a Full-School Language Program

MIRIAM B BOOTH¹

As the trend toward general education becomes more firmly entrenched in the accepted philosophy of education, the language program emerges as the centrifugal force toward which all other phases of the curriculum gravitate. In a full-school program the teacher of language arts must assume the major responsibility for training students in the basic skills of communication and in developing powers of interpretation and insight which will enable them to live richly and fully as members of a world society. He can do so effectively if the content with which he works has a planned continuity through all levels of instruction and if it serves as the core or center of the entire curriculum. It is possible within the confines of this discussion merely to suggest some of the major characteristics of such a program. Its content would, in any event, be variable since it would be of value only in proportion to the contributions made to its formation by the personnel of a school or of a school system.

Needless to say, training in all phases of communication should be given consideration. Clarity and effectiveness of expression as well as understanding and intelligent interpretation of the printed page are basic to the fulfillment of all the goals of education. Skills are, however, but a means to an end. It is imperative that pupils obtain experience in a variety of language situations. Students need to have opportunities to participate in group activities and to note the action and reaction

of language upon members of the group. At the same time, they must learn to respect the rights and privileges of the individual within that group. Only thus will they be able to take up the responsibilities of citizenship when their formal training period has been concluded.

To make room for such activities, the needless repetition of subject-matter now all too prevalent from grade to grade and from level to level must be eliminated. Linguists have pointed the way toward selecting those elements of grammatical structure and usage needed for communication in the American-English language. Much of the terminology of grammar can also be set aside, leaving that which is essential to understanding and discussion of the structure of the sentence. Attention can then be centered upon word order and upon the function of the word in the sentence in expressing ideas. Representative committees should evaluate those elements of language needed by pupils of the community at various stages of growth, should familiarize themselves with the findings of others in conducting similar research, and should then allocate certain learnings to specific grades and levels of instruction with follow-ups in accordance with the laws of learning.

A study of words in context should be an integral part of every unit of instruction and of every lesson. Perhaps the one most vital factor of the full grasp of any

¹Supervisor of English, Erie (Pa.) Public Schools.

subject is an understanding of the vocabulary peculiar to it. Concepts of words and ideas take on full meaning only as they are built up gradually but steadily as the boy or girl matures. This is, however, but one of the fundamental elements of a curriculum which continues instruction in basic reading skills throughout the entire educational period.

The content of a language program must assist in a unification of learnings. Literature can enrich geography, the social sciences, and other subjects if it seeks ways of paralleling the experiences of its pupils at various age levels.

Content must be purposive. It must reach beyond the day's assignment, beyond the pages of a single text or book, and must seek to make the present meaningful through the perspectives obtained by acquaintanceship with great literature and great authors of all ages. This is the contribution of the humanities to general education. It can satisfy, as can no other media, those yearnings for things of the spirit so necessary today. The revival of interest in great books as well as the increased attention given to American literature are illustrative of the vitality of the content of a modern language program. The continuous box-office success on Broadway of T. S. Eliot's *The Cocktail Party* is an illustration of the tremendous significance of the value of this factor in a full-school program.

To meet the exacting requirements of this restive and complex era, a language program must be vital and living. Modern writers should become more than names.

Petty bickerings as to whether *Silas Marner* or Chaucer's *Prologue* should or should not be taught should yield to a flexible program which will permit each teacher to choose from a selected list that literature both of the past and of the present by means of which he himself can best bring out concepts of human values. The love of or distaste for literature is invariably dependent upon the type of assignment and upon the manner and vitality of its presentation rather than upon its inherent difficulty.

Such statements presuppose that the abilities, needs, and interests of the child or the youth in a given situation have been carefully analyzed and teaching materials allocated with judgment. Some of the books still remaining on the reading and study lists of some large city systems make one shudder. The dearth of poetry and other literature on the elementary level is to be lamented. A good continuous reading and literature program is planned on a developmental and extensive basis which takes care of the brilliant as well as the average and dull student.

A modern curriculum in the language arts utilizes the entire facilities of the library, emphasizes such skills as outlining and précis writing, makes use of audio-visual aids, and takes into cognizance all the resources of learning found within a community. It surmounts the limitations of the printed page and seeks to inculcate social awareness of the individual and of the individual within the group. It seeks to establish attitudes based upon principles of right living and thinking. Facility in the appropriate use of the tools of communi-

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Mechanical Devices in the Classroom

MARYANN PEINS¹

One of the most effective means of mass communication that history has ever known has been presented to the American public—television! A new world of richer experiences has been opened to the children and youth of the land.

With the nation becoming so "television conscious," questions such as these are bound to arise: "Will television be introduced in the public school classrooms?" "Will a TV program replace the geography or history lesson?" Some teachers grow pale at the thought of television in the classroom, for they think Hop-along-Cassidy will be the only program in demand.

If educators still accept the theory of "social utility," i.e., that whatever is taught inside the school building must be of importance in life outside the school, then it would seem that television along with the radio, phonograph, and motion pictures should be included in school activities.

Because many educators advocate the use of mass media of communication in the classroom beginning in the elementary school, the author determined to find out just how many mechanical devices are being used by teachers in elementary schools in the teaching of speech education. Speech education in the elementary school is not a subject to be taught one-half hour a week and then to be forgotten until the next week. Rather, speech education is a subject which is taught every day—it is an integral part of the curriculum.

Beginning in kindergarten and the first grade every child should be given the opportunity to develop effective speech. It is the teacher's responsibility to make use of techniques and devices which will serve as means to the desired end of good speech.

It was not possible to make a nationwide survey and so elementary school teachers from various public schools in Atlanta, Dallas, Denver, Houston, Indianapolis, Oakland, and Rochester were asked the question, "What mechanical devices do you use in the classroom teaching of speech education?" The teachers answering this question gave the following answers: motion pictures were reported by 38.1 percent; the phonograph by 38.1 percent; the radio by 24.2 percent; the public address system by 12.3 percent; the opaque projector by 11.3 percent; the recording machine by 9.9 percent; 6.9 percent reported that they did not use any of these devices. 2.4 percent answered that "other devices" were used (these devices were not indicated).

The results of the answers to this question seem to indicate the utilization of many mechanical devices in the classroom teaching of speech education. The devices most often listed by the teachers were the phonograph and motion pictures. These data conform with the results of studies which have shown that many mechanical devices have definite value in the teaching of speech in the classroom.

¹Instructor in Speech, New York University.

Another question asked of the teachers was: "What other devices have been valuable in teaching speech in the classroom?" The teachers answering this question checked the following devices as valuable in the teaching of speech education in the classroom: the bulletin board, (26.2 percent); pictures, (26.2 percent); visual aids, (22.8 percent); toys, (14.2 percent); "other devices" (were not specified) (2.2 percent); "no devices used" (4.4 percent).

The results of the answers to this question indicate that the teachers in the schools surveyed do include many devices which they consider to be valuable in the teaching of speech education. Of all the answers checked, the greatest number of answers were for the bulletin board and pictures, which might indicate that these particular devices were the most widely used devices of all those listed and the most valuable in the teaching of speech education in the elementary schools studied.

As a further check, the author deemed it important to ask the principals of the schools surveyed to list the devices (mechanical and others) which were provided for use in the classroom teaching of speech.

The phonograph and motion pictures were each given 15.1 percent of the total amount of response by the principals answering this question. Other devices in decreasing order of proportion of the response were: the radio, 13.4 percent; the bulletin board, 13 percent; visual aids, 12.6 percent; toys, 9.3 percent; opaque projector, 7.3 percent; recording machine, 6 percent; public address system, 3.7 per-

cent; other devices (not specified), 3.3 percent.

The results of this question seem to indicate that the principals and teachers agree as to the three most frequently used mechanical devices in the classroom teaching of speech—phonograph, motion pictures, and the radio. It was evident from the principals' answers that the phonograph, motion pictures, and the radio were provided for classroom use; and, the greatest number of teachers' answers indicates that these are the most frequently used mechanical devices in the classroom teaching of speech. One of the devices least used, as evidenced by the results of the answers given, is the recording machine. This is unfortunate, for the recording machine is a wonderful device to help students improve their speech. Many teachers indicated that they desired to include this machine in the classroom, but the administrators reported that due to financial reasons they were unable to purchase such a machine.

The principals' answers further coincided with the answers given by the teachers as to "other devices" found valuable in the classroom teaching of speech. The teachers reported the bulletin board, pictures, and visual aids most valuable as devices used in the classroom for speech training. These three devices also received the greatest proportion of answers by the principals.

The use of these devices, mechanical and otherwise, coincide with the opinions of the authorities who suggest the use of devices as media for communication purposes and training in various skills.

How many of these devices do *you* use in the classroom? If you don't use any of these devices or only one or two, why not start this week to use a new device or technique to enliven your teaching methods? Plan to show a film next week and follow it with a question and answer session, quiz game, or group discussion. You'll give the students an opportunity to develop better conversation, spontaneity, flexibility, and a chance to practice good speech habits. If your school has a recording machine (disc, wire, or tape) learn how to operate it and make use of it! What greater thrill for the students than to hear their own voices and what motivation to improve their speech! Make recordings periodically (conversation and a few lines of prose). The class will be quick to notice whether they "sound good" or not. It will be much easier for the child to understand his speech "problem." Instead of saying, "Johnny, you run all your words together," or, "Mary, we don't say 'widdy wed wabbit'," have the children

make a recording and let them hear their speech and compare it with others in the class. Or, use the radio occasionally. Tune in to a good news program. Discuss the information conveyed and also the announcer's manner of speaking: was it clear, distinct, unhurried, and varied?

An attractive bulletin board with bright colors, interesting pictures, and good lay-out will stimulate conversation or questions and comments and be a good starting point for a class discussion.

There are many techniques and devices which the elementary school teacher can use in the classroom teaching of speech education. We sometimes fall into a pattern of teaching the same way and in the same manner as we did last year. Lest it becomes a habit, why not use the radio, motion pictures, the phonograph, recording machine, toys, or opaque projector in the classroom this year? You will find added interest on the part of the students, and you will afford them with an opportunity to develop better speech.

CONTENT IN THE LANGUAGE PROGRAM

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cation is acquired by bringing out the best elements in the background and interests of the child and by providing him with

skills essential to effective participation in social situations which have become illuminated through knowledge.

Summary of Research Concerning English Usage

MILDRED A. DAWSON¹

One of the genuinely vexatious problems that confronts the teacher of language is that of teaching lessons in correct usage effectively enough that the pupils will henceforth eliminate any errors which have been treated in such lessons. The fact is that incorrect usages that a child brings with him to school are likely still to be implanted in his speech after years of schooling. While out-of-school influences play a large part in fixing undesirable usages in a child's speech, it is still true that teachers may not be as effective as they could be if they were to follow the recommendations for instruction which have grown out of a considerable body of research devoted to language usage.

For example, surveys have shown teachers to be making the following mistakes in their teaching of English usage. They attempt to cover too many errors each year. They often waste time and energy by concentrating on usages that actually are acceptable to linguists on the basis of customary use in the speech of cultivated persons when speaking informally. These teachers may drill and drill on items which appear in the textbook, workbook, or course of study but which are not misused—to any great extent—by their pupils. They may not attempt to have lessons in language usage carry over into the speaking and writing of the pupils throughout the day. Certain usages may be introduced prematurely so that the pupils cannot understand the basis for selecting between the right and wrong forms. It is even likely that methods of instruction may be poorly selected.

It is hoped that this summary of research relating to the teaching of language usage will help teachers to select the more crucial items, to restrict the items taught any one year to a

few that their pupils actually make quite frequently and which they are mature enough to understand, and to utilize the methods of instruction that will eventuate in thorough learning and a tendency to put the correct usage lessons into practice in their other lessons and out-of-school speech. Then the pupils will have more time for the more important phases of language, such as learning to think clearly, to organize ideas effectively, and phrase their thoughts in a convincing and stimulating way.

In order to facilitate any reader's going to the original report on any research of particular value, a bibliography is appended; then citations within the article are made by means of parenthetical figures which correspond to the numbers assigned the various bibliographical references.

Items of Usage to Be Included in the Curriculum

Except for the comparatively recent and comprehensive study of O'Rourke (25), investigations to determine the frequency with which specific word forms have been misused are not included in this summary. O'Rourke, in 1934, reported on a nation-wide study of current practices in teaching usage. He criticized the excessively comprehensive program of grammar and usage which was then current, made recommendations of the items which should be eliminated from the curriculum, and identified the relatively few elements which should be retained and thoroughly taught.

Various investigators have made linguistic studies which have helped to give an understanding of the history and sociology of the English language. As long ago as 1927, Sterling

¹Professor of Education, Fredonia State Teacher and Moffett (18) defined levels of Englishers College, New York.

usage for 102 items—often claimed to be incorrect—as “formally correct,” “informally correct,” or “illiterate.” Baugh (2), Robertson (30), and Schlauch (31) have, during the past fifteen years, published careful studies that demonstrate the fact that the grammar of the English language is based on *word order*, not on *inflections* as is the case with Latin. Pooley (28), Bryant (4), and Marckwardt (22) have investigated the history and continuing development of our constantly changing and growing language. As a result, they have been able to prune redundancies from the grammar-usage curriculum and to rectify errors in current usage standards. Fries (9, 10) has brought together the findings and recommendations of such linguistic studies in his *American English Grammar*. Marckwardt and Walcott (23) have done a similar service in English Monograph No. 7 of the National Council of Teachers of English. The latter publication contains the results of a survey of actual current usage along with defined levels of usage for each of the items, much as Leonard (18) had done earlier.

Surveys Relating to Usage and Grammar

O'Rourke's (25) survey of the errors prevalent across the nation in 1934 revealed the fact that there is far from complete mastery of correct English usage following formal training in grammar. To illustrate: only 34.7 per cent of correct usage were known by seventh grade pupils, and 85 per cent by those in thirteenth grade. He concluded that schools at that time were slighting the more fundamental and essential elements of grammar because of their attempts to provide an overly comprehensive program of usage and grammar.

Smith (32), in evaluating instruction in English in the elementary schools of New York, found that children were generally being taught grammar without much, if any, attempt to have them apply their knowledge of grammar to

their oral and written expression. Likewise, Pooley (27, 29) found very little effort on the part of Wisconsin teachers to have the pupils apply the commonly taught rules of usage and grammar to composition. Specifically, only 4 per cent of the lessons observed in rural schools provided for the pupils' applying the rules they had been learning in respect to their speech or writing; in city schools, but 8 per cent of the lessons made such provision. Practice was an isolated affair. The principal methods in teaching usage involved the blanket use of workbook exercises, filling in blanks, and reading aloud the exercises found in language textbooks. As a rule, the whole group in a classroom was working on the same exercise, with no regard to differences in individual needs for instruction. All too often the children who did actually need practice on any certain exercise were making again and again the very same mistake which they were presumably learning to eliminate. Able pupils, therefore, were practicing on elements for which they needed no practice while those who really had been making the error in question were merely being helped to perpetuate this error. Pooley found little evidence that teachers were making any effort to correct errors made on papers written in other subjects, even though these errors may already have been taken up in English lessons.

In the junior high schools of Wisconsin, Pooley found that teachers of English devoted most of their time to the analytical, theoretical teaching of grammar, though spelling also was stressed. The functional relation of grammar to children's practices in speaking and writing was almost completely ignored or else accepted as a matter of course. Pooley commented:

The weakness of grammar instruction in Wisconsin (and probably in other states) is that so many new concepts and principles are introduced into the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades that pupils find it difficult to grasp them, let alone remember them. Thus they soon become lost;

they are unable to identify the modifiers of a subject because they do not even know what a subject is. To introduce phrases, clauses, and infinitives to such bewildered children seems idiotic, yet the evidence shows that these items are taught in grades seven and eight. (29: 79-80)

He recommended that all grammar instruction be postponed until seventh grade. Since textbooks tend to be accepted by teachers as the basis for usage and grammar lessons, it is significant to note that he found only two of 179 grammar-usage items in eight series of textbooks to be common to all these series. Moreover, these items were not uniformly allocated to the grades. It is apparent that, under such circumstances, it would be a pure accident if any textbook were to contain all the usage items which a given group of pupils would need.

Carry-over Values of Lessons in Usage and Grammar

Investigations have long been devoted to ascertaining the relation between a knowledge of grammar and the ability to speak or write correctly. In 1906, Hoyt (16) correlated the results of a check-up on pupils' grammatical knowledge and their ability to write without making serious errors. He found a correlation of but .12 to .23 between grammar and composition, but a correlation of .27 to .30 between interpretation and composition. Boraas (3) found a knowledge of grammar to be more closely related with a knowledge of arithmetic or history than with ability to write well. He concluded that grammar taught as an elementary school subject has functioned inadequately. Asker (1), in 1923, reported as follows:

Knowledge of formal grammar influences ability to judge the grammatical correctness of a sentence and ability in English composition only to a negligible degree. As the number of cases involved is large enough to be a fair representation of conditions in general we may therefore be justified in the conclusion that time

spent upon formal grammar in the elementary school is wasted so far as the majority of students is concerned, and that teachers of English composition must seek some other reason for the alleged generally poor ability in this subject than the neglect of formal grammar in the grade school. (p. 111)

In 1941, Stewart (33) made an extensive and well-controlled study to see whether thorough training in diagraming would have a favorable effect on ninth grade pupils' learning of correct usage, capitalizations, punctuation, grammar information, and sentence structure. After treating his data by the method of the analysis of covariance, he concluded that the pupils' learning of capitalization, punctuation, and English usage was no more pronounced than if these skills had received direct emphasis in the course of writing compositions.

Four years later Butterfield (5) also made a comprehensive, objective comparison of the results of direct teaching of punctuation skills with the results gained through instruction in functional grammar (immediately related to use of the specific punctuation items). His purpose was to determine how much the teaching of grammar elements affects the skill with which upper-grade pupils use selected punctuation skills. He concluded that pupils who are taught grammar attain significantly higher accomplishments in grammar as such, but that the knowledge of grammar does not appear to transfer into the area of punctuation skills to any appreciable extent even though functionally related. In fact, he got significantly superior results in punctuation by direct teaching of punctuation skills in immediate connection with written composition.

Investigations carried on for the past forty-five years have consistently shown that knowledge of grammar does not carry over into pupils' ability to use words correctly or to write good sentences. It is apparent that pupils can learn to punctuate, capitalize, use correct

word forms, and formulate sentences correctly with more certainty if they are directly taught such skills while in the process of expressing ideas. Is it not strange that so many teachers and administrators still insist that grammar be taught in elementary schools in order to improve pupils' ability to express themselves clearly and correctly when investigations have so long been consistent in showing that grammar does not carry over and is, in fact, far too complex and mature a subject for the young mind?

And what of the effectiveness of lessons in correct usage as such? Are the results gained through emphasizing usage rules and repetitive practice any more favorable than those growing out of lessons in grammar? Several investigations have been devoted to the problem of carry-over of language usage lessons to composition. In 1931, Thomas (36) endeavored to eliminate language errors through drill. He used multiple response exercises and formal dictation for providing practice in selecting and practicing the correct forms. He reported that the number of specific errors was reduced through such practice and indicated that the results tended to carry over into written composition. A year earlier Leonard (17) had reported an extensive investigation of the use of practice exercises in the teaching of capitalization and punctuation to pupils in the eighth and ninth grades. He employed proofreading, error correction, and dictation in an effort to improve pupils' ability to capitalize and punctuate correctly. He got favorable results in that pupils gained in their ability to write compositions free of the errors which they had been practicing to eliminate. This ability was shown to have been retained at least six months later.

In 1932 were reported two investigations of the effect of a knowledge of rules. Ortmeyer (26) found that, with eighth grade pupils, a knowledge of rules does not consistently carry over into the correct usage of these same rules,

nor does the correct usage of a rule indicate a corresponding knowledge of that rule. There was a correlation of .51 between knowledge and usage; therefore, Ortmeyer concluded, the teaching of punctuation rules is not effective. Catherwood (6) investigated the relationship between a knowledge of the rules and ability to correct language errors. Of the 93 per cent of seventh grade pupils who could correct certain verb errors, only 8 per cent could give the grammatical explanation of the rules.

Milligan (24) reported on a two-year program of incidental teaching which resulted in second grade children's being well acquainted with the more common and elemental phases of capitalization and punctuation. As children dictated their stories to the teacher, as they later read or copied them, and as they subsequently read from books, the teacher consistently called their attention to the necessary capital letters and punctuation marks. There was considerable carry-over here.

Methods of Instruction

As long ago as 1929, Lyman (20) enunciated a basic principle for the teaching of language usage. This he based on the findings of numerous investigations which he had summarized. He said: "The remedial work which follows the revelations of language weaknesses must be largely, if not exclusively, individual." (p. 133) Subsequent studies by Wilson (38) and Guiler (13, 14, 15) substantiated Lyman's statement. Wilson noted improved results if children were led to note their own errors, then to work on the correction of them. Guiler, with upper grade pupils, found that errors in punctuation, capitalization, and verb usage were more likely to be eliminated if instruction was adjusted to the respective needs of the pupils.

Several investigators have been concerned with the results of drill and with the determination of which techniques in drill will bring the best results. Williams (37), in 1930, came to

the conclusion that drill is valuable for dull pupils, but that it is questionable whether bright children derive much benefit from it.

In 1934, Cutright (8) made a comparison of six methods of securing correct language usage. She found language games to be the least effective of the six methods; proofreading was fifth; choice between right and wrong forms in written exercises, fourth; practice on an incorrect form with knowledge of the correct form, third. More effective than any of one of these was a combination of the preceding methods; but results did not tend to be permanent. The best single method was the choice between two alternative forms (one right, one wrong), followed by both oral and (here, too, pupils knew beforehand which form was right) written responses. Cutright commented that, if teachers hope to improve oral usage through drill, they must provide oral practice.

McIntosh (21), in 1944, reported on an interesting study in which he tried to determine the effects of learning by exposure to wrong forms in usage and spelling. Careful controls were set up. He found there was no significant difference between a method of grammar practice wherein—after the same amount of study—they were asked to supply the correct form but were never shown the wrong form. He concluded:

The fact that the comparisons revealed extremely small differences, now favoring one method, now another, yet never statistically significant, seems to lend little support to the contention that pupils should "never be required to work with erroneous expressions." By the same token the view which holds that correcting errors in sentences before the grammar principle is firmly established "will tend to confuse the pupil rather than help him" seems overly cautious. (p. 55)

Three other studies were concerned with a comparison of the results of practice and of instruction in grammar. In 1931, Symonds (34)

found that pupils profited from the oral repetition of both the right and the wrong forms, knowing at the time which was right and which was wrong. This method was twice as effective as the teaching of grammar in improving pupils' usage. Symonds concluded that only the brightest pupils are likely to succeed in making a transfer of grammatical knowledge to their compositions. He expressed the conviction that, for most children, learning any extensive amount of grammar is so difficult and troublesome that they will profit more from a direct attack upon the improvement of language. Crawford and Royer (7) compared the results of oral drill on usage with those gained through the study of grammar. They found that oral drill improved the command of English as much as grammar at the seventh grade level. Butterfield (5) reported, on the other hand, that direct methods of dealing with punctuation skills got significantly superior results as compared with those derived through lessons in related grammar.

Frogner (11) made a highly significant investigation when she studied the comparative effects of grammar teaching and the "thought approach" in teaching sentence structure. After carefully matching groups of pupils she used the thought approach with Group 1; that is, writing with the aim of expressing ideas effectively. Group 2 was taught grammar supplemented by the thought approach. She found the latter definitely superior, especially with pupils with an intelligence quotient of 105 or under. Results with the brighter pupils were about the same with pupils in either group—the thought approach or the combination method. Frogner called attention to the fact that the non-grammar approach was much more economical in time.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The first problem to be faced by a teacher who wishes to improve her language usage instruction is that of selecting the items for

teaching. First of all, she must know which language expressions are now considered acceptable by authorities in the field and which are so illiterate that they are considered crucial in the usage curriculum. The studies by O'Rourke (25), Fries (9), Marckwardt and Walcott (23), and Pooley (28) will be of aid here. Pooley, in particular, has a listing of the usages that should be included at the elementary and junior high school levels respectively. Once having determined the usages recommended for consideration, the teacher must then survey the language usage of her pupils and should include only those items which are misused by these children. Thus she may avoid the errors of including too many items during a single school year and of stressing elements which do not need attention.

The teacher's second problem lies in the selection and proper use of effective methods of instruction. For instance, only those pupils who actually need instruction on a particular item should receive such instruction. Since pupils vary in the identity of the language errors they make, much of the instruction must be individualized. Moreover, they should be led to find and to correct their own errors as shown by Guiler (13, 14, 15) and others. Investigations, too, have shown that drill on items of usage should be oral, that children learn well if they are led to choose between right and wrong forms after they have been shown which is right, that dull children benefit more from drill than do their brighter classmates, and that only bright pupils (who probably have the least need for improvement) are likely to put a knowledge of grammatical principles into practice. (7, 8, 21, 34, 37) Neither a study of grammar nor of rules is likely to improve speech and writing (1, 3, 6, 16, 26); rather, skills should be taught directly whenever need for them arises throughout the school day. (5, 24, 33) The "thought approach" is preferable to the "grammar approach" in teaching sentence structure. (11)

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Reading and Understanding

WILLIAM S. GRAY¹

The preceding sections of this report have directed attention to the large amount of verbalism that prevails today in many school activities and to the practices that contribute to it and often make it inevitable. They have also identified the conditions under which clear concepts can be acquired and rapid growth made in the accurate interpretation and use of language. The purpose of this chapter is to consider the problems faced in promoting a clear grasp of the meaning of what is read and in increasing understanding through reading.

The Importance of the Problem

The development of ability to read with understanding has always been a challenging task. Because of the increasing demands made on readers during recent years the responsibility faced by schools in this connection was never greater. The fact is widely recognized that reading can make its largest contribution to personal development and social progress only as children and youth acquire a high level of efficiency in understanding what is read. The responsibility for needed stimulus and help rests heavily upon teachers in both elementary and secondary schools. Efficient guidance requires a clear recognition of the nature of the reading act, the steps involved in interpreting what is read and persistent effort in helping each pupil advance in harmony with his unique characteristics and needs.

The need for a vigorous attack on reading problems is further emphasized by the fact that thousands of boys and girls are unduly retarded in reading or present unusual handicaps. As a result they secure only vague, or even wrong, concepts through reading. They also use orally or in written reports the words of the selections read with little or no real understanding of their meaning or significance. As a

result they are thwarted in their effort to do satisfactory school work. Teachers are not only keenly aware of but are baffled by the presence of such pupils in their classes and are eagerly seeking help in solving the problems they present.

To meet the varied needs described above is the responsibility of an adequate reading program. (12) For pupils who are progressing normally, developmental training in reading should be provided which promotes growth in the increasingly mature reading attitudes and skills required at successive levels of advancement. For thousands of boys and girls who fail for one reason or another to read as well as they should, in terms of their ability to learn, special help should be provided that is adapted to their needs. For those who experience unusual difficulty in reading, provision should be made for a thorough diagnosis and for appropriate therapeutic and remedial measures. Because of the limited space available, it will not be possible to discuss separately the problems faced by each group in acquiring real competence in understanding what they read. The plan has been adopted rather of considering factors, difficulties and procedures that apply to all.

Basic Facts Relating to Understanding in Reading

In seeking to improve pupil efficiency in the understanding of what is read, three basic facts should be kept in mind. The first is that reading is essentially a process of interpreting language. Just as a good listener interprets the language of the speaker so the good reader interprets the language of the author. In a series of research studies carried on by Horn (7) and his co-workers, it was found that a child in the higher

¹Professor of Education, the University of Chicago.

grades who cannot understand what he reads often does not understand the same passage when it is read to him. They also found that as a child matures his ability to understand what he reads improves. On the basis of all the evidence secured Horn concluded that a major cause of the current failure in reading is inability of many pupils to interpret language readily. From this point of view the problems faced in promoting increased understanding in reading are integral parts of the broader problem of developing increased ability in interpreting language.

The fact merits emphasis that a child's comparative mastery of oral and printed language varies at different levels of school progress. As pointed out by Hughes and Cox (9) first-grade children often use sentences and forms of expression that are more mature than those commonly used in beginning reading books. This is as it should be because experience shows that progress in beginning reading is more rapid when the words and forms of expression used are in the child's vocabulary and relate to familiar experiences. Shortly, however, the language of the books read becomes more mature than that used by the child in such respects as range of vocabulary use and length and complexity of sentences. Before a child can understand the meaning of such passages, he often needs help in interpreting the new language forms used. If the activities of the reading period are properly conceived and directed the child not only acquires new concepts and broader understandings but grows also in his acquaintance with and mastery of the more mature language patterns involved.

The second basic fact is that the extent to which one can associate meanings with written or printed forms is a matter of experience. This implies that the words of a passage do not convey meanings to the reader directly. They are the source of stimuli which lead to the recall of previous items of experience. If they are ac-

curately recalled and related, he may secure the meaning which the author wished to convey. To the extent that the reader has not had relevant experience he faces serious difficulty in securing a clear grasp of meaning. Either appropriate experiences must be provided in advance or the reader must be trained to identify clues to meaning in the passage or to secure help from supplementary aids, such as the dictionary. The great importance of appropriate previous experience and an adequate meaning vocabulary is shown clearly by the high correlation (6) between the size of a reader's meaning vocabulary and his ability to understand what he reads.

But reading and experience are related in another way. When a child reads a passage containing familiar words and concepts which are presented in new relationships, he may acquire new experience. When he reads, for example, that parts of Greenland are always covered with "ice" and "snow," he knows the meaning of the words "ice" and "snow" and has acquired some sense of the meaning of "always." When he puts these familiar ideas together in the order indicated an experience results which is new and illuminating. Of great importance is the fact that children can greatly extend their experiences and broaden their range of understanding in this way. Reading as well as concrete experience may thus enrich their background and prepare them for understanding an increasingly wide range of materials.

The third fact that merits emphasis is that the understanding of what is read involves thinking of a high order. As implied in the preceding paragraph the good reader does more than recall appropriate meanings. He also fuses these meanings into the sequence or pattern of ideas intended by the author. According to Thorndike, (15) this is an elaborate and complex mental process. It involves "a weighing of each of many elements in a sentence," "their organization in their proper relations one to

another," and "the selection of certain of their connotations" and "the rejection of others." After analyzing what is involved in answering questions about simple paragraphs, Thorndike concluded that this step involves "all the features characteristic of typical reasonings." Concerning the reading of explanatory or argumentative paragraphs in textbooks and even of narration or description; he found that it involves "the same sort of organization and analytical action of ideas as occurs in thinking of supposedly higher sorts."

Sources of Difficulty in Acquiring Meaning Through Reading

Attention is directed next to the common sources of difficulty in acquiring meaning through reading. As pointed out by Horn (7), they may be classified under three main headings. Because they have been discussed at length in other reports (4) they will be reviewed very briefly in this chapter.

Of basic importance is the nature of the concepts and understandings to be secured. If the materials read by a pupil present ideas that are both simple and familiar, they are usually apprehended quickly and accurately. If, on the other hand, they are "new, inherently difficult, and remote from the reader's experience," he will encounter difficulty in grasping them even though they are written in language that is simple, clear and lucid. In reading such material "the selection of pertinent elements from one's past experience, the gathering and evaluation of new data, and the organization of new and old ideas into an adequate construct takes time, skill and reflective effort." (7-p. 157) Unfortunately many of the concepts presented in textbooks and courses of study "are not only too difficult but also too numerous to be mastered" by many of the pupils to whom they are assigned. The solution lies, in part, in the better selection of reading materials in terms of the present ability and level of maturity of the

pupils. Equally important is the responsibility at all grade levels of training and guidance which promote increasing ability on the part of the pupils to secure the meaning of relatively difficult materials through independent effort.

A second source of difficulty relates to the way in which ideas are expressed. Even very simple ideas are often presented in language which is difficult to understand. Some of the more obvious causes of difficulty are: failure of the author to understand the needs and limitations of his readers and to define explicitly the ideas to be conveyed; "omission of necessary relevant details, and the inclusion of unnecessary irrelevant details" (7-p. 160) and the use of a style and vocabulary unsuited for those to whom it is assigned. At least two steps are essential in reducing or eliminating such difficulties. The first is the selection or preparation of material which in terms of the language used is adapted to the present ability of the pupils to understand. The second is systematic guidance in which pupils become gradually acquainted with various types of presentations and grow in ability to grasp the meaning of increasing complex and involved kinds of writing.

A third source of difficulty is inherent in the limitations of the reader. No matter how simply and clearly a writer may present ideas, he does not convey the same ideas to all members of a group. Furthermore, pupils differ widely in their ability to interpret what is read. This is due to differences in personal attainments and characteristics such as mental capacity, ability to read, nature of their interests, motives and drives, their background of experience and their command of language. (7-p. 172) Because of the great importance of such factors in acquiring clear concepts and broad understandings in reading, it is necessary for teachers to study each pupil carefully and adjust to or overcome personal difficulties and limitations in efforts to improve their efficiency in reading.

The discussion thus far has emphasized the great importance of reading with understanding. It has pointed out the fact that reading is essentially a process of interpreting language that requires an adequate background of experience and a high order of thinking. It has also pointed out three main causes of difficulty in acquiring meaning through reading, namely, the inherent difficulty of the concepts presented, the nature of the language used, and the characteristics of individuals which limit understanding. With these facts in mind, the procedures involved in promoting growth in understanding through reading will now be considered.

Promoting Growth in Understanding

As implied earlier, it is not an easy task for children to engage effectively in all the kinds of reading in which they do and should engage. Neither is it a simple task for teachers to promote the development of all the attitudes and skills needed by pupils in acquiring clear, accurate concepts and essential understandings as they read. In order to sharpen the issues and to make the suggestions as concrete and specific as possible the discussion that follows will deal, first, with common requisites for the efficient teaching of reading, second, with the problems involved in promoting growth in understanding in various aspects of interpretation, and third, with adjustments needed in achieving specific purposes.

Common Requisites for Efficient Teaching of Reading

Of basic importance is the fact that children should have strong motives or specific purposes for reading that appeal to them as significant and worthwhile. Such motives provide the stimulus and inner drive that enable a child to engage wholeheartedly in reading specific materials. A closely related requisite is that the child should read with his mind intent on meaning. (10) Observations show that a good reader demands meaning as he reads. This at-

titude, or mental set, focuses attention on the content of a passage, insures the arousal of a maximum number of meaning associations and aids in anticipating the sequence of ideas presented.

In order to provide these common requisites, teachers create a stimulating, provocative classroom environment, arouse keen interests and curiosities among pupils and aid them in discovering problems which they delight to solve through the use of reading and other aids to learning. Children who approach reading with challenging purposes or anticipated pleasures in mind and who become absorbed at once in the content of what they read are launched, as a rule, on a valuable learning experience.

Securing the Literal Meaning of What Is Read. The first requirement in all good reading is to secure the literal meaning (3) of a passage. By this is meant that aspect of meaning which is usually referred to when the reader is asked "What does the passage say?" To read well at this level is prerequisite to any broader understanding of what is read. It includes the accurate perception of words, the fusion of separate meanings into ideas, and a clear grasp of their relationship and organization. For the purpose of this discussion, some of the teaching responsibilities faced will be discussed at two levels.

a. In Reading Very Simple Passages

Let us assume that pupils in the early grades are reading passages that relate to familiar experiences and are expressed in words and language patterns with which they are already familiar. As they read with their minds intent on meaning, their first problem is to distinguish one word from another, that is to know that a given word is "boy" and not "toy." As words are thus identified the meanings previously associated with them are recalled. Because of the great importance of these basic steps teachers should be on the alert at all times to identify pupils who confuse word forms or fail to at-

tach appropriate meanings to them. Much re-teaching is often necessary before pupils are ready to read even very simple passages without help.

As meanings are associated with one word after another, they are fused into a chain or sequence of ideas. In taking this step the good reader holds in suspense the various meanings aroused until the total meaning intended is recognized. Thus in reading the sentence, "The boy hit the ball," the meanings of the successive words are held in mind until the word "ball" is recognized and the complete idea expressed by the sentence is grasped. This characteristic of good reading makes it possible to accept or modify the meanings recalled for particular words before a decision is reached concerning the total meaning of a given sentence or longer passage. Studies made by Thorndike (15-pp. 323-32) led him to conclude that good thinking is essential at every step in securing a clear grasp of the meaning of a passage. The pupil must select, reject, emphasize, relate and organize as the search for meaning goes forward. Efficiency can be promoted by teachers through well-directed discussions and pointed questions relating to the content of what is read.

b. In Reading More Difficult Passages

As pupils make progress in learning to read the passages assigned relate increasingly to things and events which lie outside the realm of familiar experience. Furthermore, the vocabulary and forms of expression used are often equally unfamiliar. As a result new problems arise. They must be met effectively if pupils are to secure a clear grasp of the meaning of what they read. At least four of the types of problems faced will be considered.

Background of Experience. Of basic importance are difficulties in securing meanings which are due to the fact that some or many of the ideas included lie outside the child's range of experience. Before assigning materials of this

kind efficient teachers review its content in the light of the pupil's present experiences. If new concepts and ideas are involved they determine what additional experiences pupils need in order to understand them clearly. If only a limited amount of new experience or information is needed, steps are taken to supply them during the assignment period by relating pertinent incidents, showing pictures or slides, and clarifying vague or hazy ideas. Oftentimes a more extended background should be developed. To this end, projects are undertaken, a field trip organized, or a film presented which extends and enriches experience in pertinent directions. The value of any such activities is increased as the new ideas presented are discussed freely, concepts clarified and appropriate words added through use to the oral vocabulary of the pupils.

The need for providing pertinent experience extends from the kindergarten to the university. The value of appropriate steps was demonstrated by Doris Waters (16) who studied the types of experiences that her kindergarten pupils needed in order to be able to read and understand the content of the readers they would use in the first grade. She then organized projects, such as "a farm project" and "a circus project" which aimed to provide experiences in these areas that were specifically needed in order to read with understanding in the first grade. The importance of a meaningful background was further emphasized as a result of an experiment by Chall (2) with sixth-and eighth-grade children. She concluded "We must continue, in our reading programs to teach the reading skills directly; but we must, in addition, supply a background for the reading to become meaningful."

Meaning Vocabulary. As pointed out earlier the extent of one's meaning vocabulary is more closely related to comprehension in reading than any other factor studied thus far other than intelligence. When the materials assigned

contain too many new words and concepts pupils at all levels of advancement are blocked in their effort to grasp the meaning of what they read. A first step is to assign materials which are properly adjusted in respect to meaning vocabulary to the level of advancement of the pupils. The second step is to provide the training and guidance needed to insure the continuous enrichment of meaning vocabulary and the development of the attitudes and skills essential in identifying the meanings of new words independently.

Of large importance in enriching meaning vocabularies is the school and classroom environment in which pupils carry on learning activities. Evidence to this effect was secured years ago by Bonser, Burch and Turner (1) and has been reaffirmed many times since. Through the use of tests they compared the efficiency of the pupils in two schools in meaning vocabulary. Careful study of various possible factors led them to conclude that the school which ranked highest was superior in the following respects: (1) "Its subject matter was intimately and vitally related to everyday life—the school work gives meaning and understanding of the daily activities of which the child himself is a part." (2) Because preparation and study on the part of the teacher is required daily she is kept "fresh and alive in the development of the work." (3) The work calls "for initiative and constant effort on the part of pupils comparable to that called forth by play and home life." (4) The problem method of teaching necessitates "clear, purposive thinking on the part of both teacher and pupils" in which skill and effectiveness are developed in reading and study. (5) Because the issues studied are of vital concern to the pupils their search of meanings is vigorous and "their expression is spontaneous, free and adequate."

After a favorable learning climate has been developed it is necessary to give specific atten-

tion to the development of word meanings. In an elaborate study, Gray and Holmes (4) found that pupils were unable to recognize accurately their needs and deficiencies in respect to word meanings. The investigators then sought to determine the relative effectiveness of direct and incidental methods of promoting vocabulary growth. After selecting comparable experimental and control groups at the fourth-grade level they developed similar procedures in teaching each unit to both groups excepting with respect to word meanings. In the experimental group, the teacher gave specific attention to new and unfamiliar words helping pupils through a study of the context and the use of illustrations, pictures and other devices to secure a clear grasp of the meaning of words as used in the passages read. The words were also used freely in classroom discussion and often in written reports. In the case of the control group the teacher provided no help in word meanings except as individual children asked for it. Intensive studies of the progress of the pupils showed that the experimental group not only made significantly greater growth in meaning vocabulary but also in oral and silent reading achievement, in spelling, and in the richness and accuracy of the vocabulary used in oral and written reports.

From these and scores of related studies striking evidence has been secured of the value of a stimulating environment, of the use of reading materials containing vital content, and of specific attention to word meanings in promoting growth in understanding what is read. To this end good teachers everywhere make use of a variety of techniques depending on the level of advancement of their pupils. In the earliest grades they introduce words into reading lessons only after vivid meanings have been associated with them in oral conversation. As pupils advance time is often reserved in discussion periods preceding reading to introduce new key words and, by means of discussion,

pictures and other devices, to associate appropriate meanings with them. As the reading proceeds, use is made of both the picture and verbal text in determining the meanings of words appropriate to the context. At a still more advanced level attention is directed to the meanings of prefixes, suffixes and roots, and skill developed in identifying the parts of words that form meaningful units and in applying them in the recognition of new words. Beyond the primary grades thorough training is provided in the use of dictionaries and other sources of information. The ultimate goal is capacity on the part of each pupil to use easily and effectively all aids to meaning that will help him in enriching his understanding of a passage.

Language Patterns. Most materials are written in harmony with certain grammatical, rhetorical and logical principles. At the beginning stages of reading the materials read are so simple that they fall within the everyday language patterns of the pupils and are easily understood. As pointed out earlier, however, some of the sentences included in more advanced reading lessons are more complex, more mature in pattern or at least different from those used by the child in his daily conversation. Unless help is provided in such cases he will be blocked in his effort to understand what he is reading. This was clearly illustrated in the case of a boy from a German-speaking home who met with great difficulty in grasping the meaning of assigned materials. Questioning by the writer brought forth the explanation that "the book didn't say it as we say it at home." Further study of his difficulty showed that he was usually blocked when the order in which the ideas were presented in an English sentence differed significantly from that in German.

The foregoing example suggests only one of many types of language difficulties which children may encounter in reading. Experience

(14) shows that they are blocked by any unusual arrangement of words that delays "the forward movement of the thought" they are seeking to grasp. They are confused by tricky types of sentences beginning with "it" and "there," by "long parallelisms, particularly if some of the parts are elliptical," by "long modifying clauses placed loosely in the sentence," and by poetic inversions of various kinds. Furthermore, "pronouns can trip the reader disastrously if they are carelessly set too close to meaningful nouns other than their antecedents," poorly organized materials are definitely discouraging to the reader; and figures of speech often result in distorted motions of the ideas in the passage. These and many other difficulties of form and structure assail the immature reader on every hand and prevent him from securing a clear grasp of meaning.

As a result of classroom experience and experiments at least three conclusions have been reached concerning ways of helping pupils grow in ability to interpret passages that use relatively mature language forms. The first is that the technical study of grammar and rhetoric in which elements are merely identified and labelled is of little value. (5) The second is that difficulties in understanding due to elements of form and structure demand attention. For example, the ideas contributed by specific groups of words (clauses), the word to which a given pronoun refers and the meaning implied by a figure of speech should often be discussed pointedly with individuals or groups. When a specific difficulty is under discussion several sentences presenting similar problems of interpretation may be placed on the blackboard and examined to advantage. It is helpful also to have the children seek for other examples in their books and to consider the meaning of the sentences in which they appear. Two results of such training should be a growing sensitiveness to the function of various parts of sentences and paragraphs and the habit of attacking such

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Of large importance also, according to Salisbury (14-p. 93) is "the creative construction of original sentences in free composition." The pupil who is composing pretends that he is also the reader and "challenges each sentence to be sure that it actually says what he means it to say." In his effort to attain economy and clarity in the expression of ideas, he revises, modifies and changes. As the pupil's "own power of building mature sentences increases," he "acquires added skill" in interpreting increasingly complex and difficult sentences and paragraphs. It is obvious that growth in reading is thus closely integrated with growth in the other language arts. Progress is attained through carefully directed effort in various speaking, listening, writing and reading situations that are highly motivated.

In light of the foregoing discussion, it is apparent that promoting growth in ability to secure the sense meaning of a passage is a very challenging task. Whereas the teaching problems involved are most conspicuous in the beginning stages of learning to read they demand attention at every level of advancement from the kindergarten to the university.

Securing Additional Meanings and Implications.

But a good reader does more than grasp the literal meaning of a passage; he is also alert to the broader meanings inherent in what he reads. (3-pp. 65-70) This involves what is often called reading "between" and "beyond" the lines. Failure to read in this broader sense explains why pupils at most levels of advancement do not acquire the breadth and depth of understanding expected of them. Unfortunately the training given in many schools does not develop as fully as it should the understandings, attitudes, and skills essential. For the purposes of this discussion they will be grouped under four headings.

The Kind of Material Read. Of primary importance is the fact that selections and books are written for different purposes and are cast into different forms, such as news accounts, short stories, directions for doing things, lyric poetry. In order to secure the kind of message that a selection was written to contribute, a good reader recognizes the type of material at hand, its special purpose, and the things he should look for in reading. A child begins to grow in this capacity early in the grades as he learns to distinguish between story and factual material. Through carefully planned guidance and class discussion he very soon discovers what each type of material contributes and the things to look for in reading. His ability increases in the middle and upper grades as he reads varied types of stories, literary selections, and materials in textbooks. Through the guidance provided pupils grow rapidly in ability to identify the types of material they are reading and the kinds of questions they should ask as they read. Such understandings, attitudes and skills are of great importance in securing the broader meaning of a passage.

The Writer's Purpose, Mood and Tone. Closely associated with a clear recognition of the kind of material read is ability to identify the author's purpose and tone. (13) At times the author states his purpose directly. Often he leaves to the reader the task of inferring the purpose of a selection from the general form in which it is written, the approach that he makes to his topic and his use of language. For example, in writing a booklet entitled "A Day with Alice in England," the author may be interested chiefly in telling a story about Alice and the kind of girl she is. On the other hand, the purpose may be to discuss the conditions that prevailed in England at some period in history. If the reader secures the kind of insights that the story aims to contribute he must recognize at once which of these purposes guided the author in writing the article.

Growth in ability to adjust one's reading to the author's purpose results from carefully planned guidance through the grades and high school which promotes increasing ability to recognize the author's purpose and the kinds of questions he should ask while reading to insure a clear understanding of the message intended. Equally important is directed study which enables pupils to recognize the author's mood when writing (happy, sarcastic) and his attitude toward the reader and the things he is writing about.

The Meanings Implied But Not Stated. The good reader not only recognizes the ideas actually presented but also those that are implied but not stated. This includes recognizing the things purposely left unsaid for effect, seeing implications, recognizing consequences, drawing inferences from the facts presented and recognizing the conclusions to which the facts presented point. Ability to interpret in these various ways is essential to a clear understanding of a passage. Children grow in ability to grasp implied meanings as teachers center attention upon examples of such meanings in reading materials and through discussion help to bring these hidden meanings to light. When pupils first begin to read between the lines they often make errors. For example, they may infer poorly and as a result reach wrong conclusions. Such errors and other weaknesses come out clearly when children have an opportunity to present and compare their respective understandings of the meanings implied in given paragraphs.

Interpreting in the Light of All the Reader Knows. In final analysis a good reader interprets what he reads in the light of all he knows that relates to the meaning of a passage. Assume, for example, that a reader has read the sentence "Columbus was overjoyed with the possibilities that lay before him when he learned that Queen Isabella had granted his request." His grasp of its literal meaning en-

ables him to answer such questions as "Who granted Columbus' request?" "How did he feel when he heard that the Queen had done so?" But a good reader goes far beyond such a grasp of the meaning of the sentence. As he reads, he recalls Columbus' beliefs and ambitions, why he turned to Queen Isabella for help, the extent to which his hopes depended on her decision, what the steps were that he was now prepared to take and the probable political, economic and religious implications of the success of his venture. Obviously the breadth and depth of the associations aroused depend upon the wealth of direct and vicarious experience which the reader has had that relates to the events described.

Much of the failure of pupils to interpret broadly what they read is not due to inability to secure the literal meaning of passages. It is due rather to meager background in the area under discussion or to failure to recall pertinent facts. To promote breadth of understanding the following steps are essential. Before making assignments the teacher should determine whether the pupils have already acquired directly or through reading a sufficient background to enable them to grasp the broader meanings implied by the materials to be read. At times a review of relevant facts may be necessary before or at the time an assignment is made. Not infrequently new facts must be presented in class or secured through background reading. The assignment and class discussion that follows should direct the pupils attention to relevant items, stimulate the recall of pertinent associations, and cultivate the habit of interpreting what is read in the light of all that one knows that has a bearing on the topic.

The development of ability to interpret the author's language in this broad sense is not an easy task. It requires just as careful planning and pupil guidance as does a reading lesson which aims to develop the basic habits involved

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in recognizing words and in securing the sense meaning of a passage. Each reading activity should promote understandings that should function helpfully in interpreting subsequent readings broadly. Fortunate indeed is the pupil who discovers early the great value of interpreting what he reads in this broader sense and who is constantly alert to the various meanings and implications of what he reads. Of equal importance also is a clear recognition by the reader at times that he is not prepared to interpret adequately what he is reading and who turns to other books and sources of information for needed background.

Reaction to the Ideas Presented (3-pp. 70-72). If reading is to serve as a safe guide to thinking and action, boys and girls must not only interpret what they read broadly but must reflect on their meaning and react appreciatively or critically to them. This is as true in reading as in listening. Psychologists have pointed out repeatedly that it is not what is presented to the child that promotes growth but rather the reaction he makes to the ideas acquired. It follows that beginning in the earliest grades, good teaching seeks to stimulate clear thinking and the weighing of values. For example, such questions as the following may prove helpful in promoting rational reactions: Do you think the "Little Red Hen" could really talk? Is this a true or make believe story? Why do you think so? Did John do the right thing when he left his pet without water? What facts in the story support your answer? As pupils advance they may judge the relevance of materials to a problem, the value of the ideas gained to the purpose at hand, the extent to which the information presented agrees or disagrees with previous concrete experience, the literary merits of a selection, the soundness of the author's conclusions, or indeed, the validity of the assumptions underlying an author's point of view.

In order to react critically as one reads, a sound basis for judgment is essential. At first

a child is limited to the facts acquired through concrete experience and to the attitudes, beliefs, and standards which are acquired more or less unconsciously from his home and neighborhood and later rationalized. Experience shows that such standards or guiding concepts differ widely among individuals and groups. As the pupil advances he acquires a growing body of general information, specific facts and scientific principles through directed activities, class discussion and study. One of the challenging tasks which teachers face is to help children acquire rational standards of judgment and a broad background of information, concepts, and principles that will serve as sound guides in reacting to what he reads.

As a good reader engages in critical reading, he proceeds cautiously. He endeavors first of all to understand clearly what the author has said before he expresses judgments concerning it. This often calls for careful re-reading. As soon as he is sure of the facts presented he recalls to mind all that he knows that would aid him in making a valid judgment concerning them. Oftentimes much effort is necessary to secure facts which will confirm or refute the author's statements or points of view. Furthermore, the good reader checks carefully on the soundness of his own conclusions. Efficient teaching strives constantly to cultivate an inquiring attitude, to develop the habit of reacting intelligently to what is read, to broaden the pupils' preparation to make rational reactions, and to lead them to know when to express and when to withhold judgments.

Use or Application of the Ideas Acquired Through Reading (3-pp. 72-73) As the good reader interprets accurately and reacts critically he integrates the valid ideas acquired with previous experiences so that new or clearer understandings, rational attitudes or improved patterns of thinking and behavior result. Far too often the reading done in school stops short of this significant step. As a result

the mind becomes a mere storehouse of facts and not a creative agent for broadening and deepening understanding. Fortunate, indeed, is the child who approaches his reading with a challenging problem in mind, who interprets broadly and reacts critically and who is constantly challenged by such questions as: What new ideas have you acquired through reading? How have they changed or re-enforced your previous understanding of this topic? How do these facts contribute to the solution of our problem? In what ways have your attitudes toward boys and girls from other lands been changed by your reading? The understandings and attitudes thus acquired are used throughout the pupil's life in directing thinking, in guiding overt behavior, in defending a point of view, and in moulding interests. Only as reading contributes thus to the pupil's understanding does it render its greatest service.

Unfortunately reading as well as other aids to learning may produce harmful as well as desirable effects. For example, it may result in hate, fear or prejudice as well as happiness, good will or ambition. Many of the decisions of the reader may be reached without clear understanding and there may be action without careful study of all the facts involved. A good teacher seeks constantly to reduce such responses to a minimum. Through careful guidance she stimulates open-minded inquiry and willingness to suspend judgment until all the facts have been considered and she promotes the kind of thinking while reading that insures growth in understanding and the development of rich and stable personalities.

Adjustments in Reading to Satisfy the Reader's Purposes

Most of the discussion thus far has been concerned with the steps essential in reading material to secure a clear grasp of its meaning and to broaden understanding. Much of the reading which is done, however, is in response to specific interests and needs of the reader.

All of the attitudes, skills of interpretation and modes of thinking discussed in this chapter are involved in satisfying the unique interests and needs of a reader. In addition the good reader takes the following steps: (3-pp. 35-36)

1. He defines clearly the ends which he hopes to achieve through reading which may vary from finding the answer to a specific question to seeking enjoyment and relaxation.
2. He recognizes the nature of the demand that will be made upon him which may vary from merely grasping the sense meaning of a passage and selecting the answer to a fact question to a broad interpretation of the meaning of a passage, rational reactions to the ideas presented, and deliberate reflection on their significance and applications.
3. He studies the kind and source of the material to be read and the extent to which it must be read in detail and studied critically in order to achieve his purpose.
4. He then decides on an appropriate procedure in reading, concentrates while reading on the kinds of information or understandings sought, and adjusts his speed of reading to the ends to be attained.

The foregoing discussion has directed attention to only some of the many problems involved in promoting understanding in and through reading. It will have served a valuable purpose if it arouses keen interest in and an inquiring attitude toward these and other challenging problems relating to understanding in reading.

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Elementary English, 211 W. 68th St., Chicago 21, Ill., will pay 50c each for a limited number of copies of the April, 1936, January, February, April, and December, 1939, October and November, 1940, and January, February, and April, 1941 issues of *Elementary English*.

Look and Listen

Edited by RAOUL R. HAAS¹

"Invitation to Learning," one of the programs listed in the FREC recommendations of educationally significant radio programs published in these pages in December 1950, began a new 26-week series, pairing or contrasting great works of literature, on Sunday January 7 (CBS, 11:35 a.m.—12:00 noon, EST). The entire series, produced by Dr. George Crothers, deals with man's quest for meaning to this life as expressed by the great writers of all time.

Books by authors of many generations and many nations will be discussed by a panel of distinguished scholars, devoting a full broadcast to each literary work. Dr. Lyman Bryson, associated with the program since its start in 1940 and its regular chairman since 1947, will preside at each of these programs.

The schedule of paired authors and their works for March through July 1 follows:

- March 4—Aristophanes, *Comedies*.
- March 11—Moliere, *Comedies*.
- March 18—Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*.
- March 25—Calvin, *Institutions of the Christian Religion*.
- April 1—Virgil, *The Aeneid*.
- April 8—*The Niebelungenlied*.
- April 15—Agricola, *On Metals*.
- April 22—Leonardo da Vinci, *Notebooks*.
- April 29—Shakespeare, *King Lear*.
- May 6—Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*.
- May 13—Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*.
- May 20—James, *Pragmatism*.
- May 27—Sophocles, *Antigone*.
- June 3—Racine, *Athalie*.
- June 10—Descartes, *Discourse on Method*.
- June 17—Darwin, *On the Origin of Species*.
- June 24—Herodotus, *History*.
- July 1—Carlyle, *History of the French Revolution*.

A new weekly half-hour public service series exploring vital phases of national mobilization is "The Facts We Face" (CBS-TV, 5:00—5:30 p.m., EST. Via WTOP-TV, Washington, D. C.).

In announcing the new series, Dr. Frank Stanton, President of CBS, said: "It is our intention to utilize 'The Facts We Face' as a vehicle for the explanation to the American viewing public of the many facets of the mobilization program which affect them directly.

"In the emergency program ahead, it is extremely important that we have an informed public. At this time of crisis, the Columbia Broadcasting System believes that it can make a very real contribution to the American people and to their comprehensive understanding of current mobilization issues through a program of this type."

The series will present top officials in government, business, labor and agriculture who will analyze phases of mobilization and outline the readjustments in national economy and modes of life that will be necessary to meet the new emergency. Also each week, two or more CBS reporters will describe in as much detail as possible the changes and adjustments required of the American people.

● To meet the need for a service to aid teachers in the selection and purchase of phonograph records for classroom use, the Children's Reading Service, 106 Beekman Street, New York 7, has recently published its first catalog. Edited by Dr. Warren S. Freeman, Dean of the College of Music of Boston University, the catalog presents some 500 chosen records, arranged by subject areas and grade groups. They are listed not only for music, but for language

¹Mr. Haas is Director, North Side Branch, the Chicago Teachers College.

arts, science, and social studies. Copies may be ordered through the Children's Reading Service for 10c each. (*Service Bulletin of the FREC*, November 1950.)

● RCA Victor has available on request two catalogs which teachers using audio instructional materials will wish to have. (1) *The Music America Loves Best*. "More than half a century of listening to recorded music has stamped a clearly recognizable pattern of the likes and dislikes of the American people. From history's vast offering of music literature they have shown a distinct preference for particular forms of music—and for specific selections within those forms. Gradually there has emerged a great body of music that has become—in a sense—almost exclusively American in character.

"In this catalog, RCA Victor has gathered together from its great library of recorded masterpieces a definitive cross section of this music, each part of which has proven itself truly to be 'The Music America Loves Best.'" In addition to the 790 self-selected American favorites, this catalog lists current Red Seal, popular and children's recordings.

(2) *The Request Catalog*. Intended for the connoisseur of fine music, this catalog lists recordings which are available on special request through dealers. Although the artistic quality of the music literature is unquestioned, it has commanded only a specialized audience and most shops will not carry these recordings in stock.

● Teachers of music, particularly, will wish to display to their classes the photographs of famous musicians included in *Words and Music*, a collection of comments by well-known authors about some of the musical giants of the present day in opera and concert. This fascinating booklet, as are the two catalogs of RCA Victor recordings, may be requested through Educational Services, RCA Victor, Camden, New Jersey.

● From Audio Education, Inc., an organization bringing together the American Book Company and Decca Records, Inc., may be had a listing of recordings selected because they relate to some phase of the elementary or secondary school curricula and may extend the learnings involved. Many of the recordings listed may be purchased in record shops, but the teaching guides published by Audio Education may be obtained only through orders placed with the American Book Company.

In general, the manuals are organized around three major areas: "1. Suggestions for using the recordings in the curriculum with at least one teaching unit rather fully developed; 2. a reference section of items found in the recording such as sound effects, unusual vocabulary, and suggestions for further activities; 3. reference suggestions of books and other related audio-visual materials." For details, write the American Book Company, 88 Lexington Avenue, New York 16.

● Folkways Ethnic Library, an independent project, specializes in ethnic recordings, filmstrips, and other related materials. Included are songs from North and South America, from many European countries as well as from the Middle East, Asia, the Pacific, and Africa. All recordings are made on location by authorities in their fields and each album is accompanied by an illustrated manual of background notes. These recordings are suitable for use in studies of art, social studies, science, and languages as well as musicology and the dance. Request information from Folkways Records and Service Corporation, 117 West 46th Street, New York 19.

● Selected and organized by Lilla Belle Pitts, Professor of Music Education, Teachers College, Columbia University and Gladys Tipton, Professor of Music Education, the University of Tennessee, is the *Basic Record Library for Elementary Schools* available through RCA Victor. The program is intended to provide

basic materials in rhythms, listening, singing, and special activities. The 21 albums of 83 records contain 370 compositions—classical, modern and folk music. Each album is complete with notes for the teacher.

The library is designed to provide a planned course of teaching through the primary and upper elementary grades. The basic material for teaching music appreciation is derived from the essence of the music itself and the notes suggest a wealth of opportunity for correlation with other subject matter areas. A complete listing of the selections in each album may be had by writing Educational Services, RCA Victor.

● Booklets, posters, maps, and other literature as well as films and filmstrips in color and black and white may be obtained from the Australian News and Information Bureau, 636 Fifth Avenue, New York 20. The only charge for the material is the actual postage.

● As a supplement and replacement for its current catalog of 16mm teaching films, Young America Films has just published a new *Price List and Correlation Chart of Teaching Films*. A total of 108 teaching films are listed for all grade levels, from primary to college and adult, and for all school subjects. In addition to listing the new prices, which became effective January 1, this new YAF publication is so organized that it provides immediate information as to the recommended grade level and curriculum area for each Young America teaching film. Copies of the four-page chart are being distributed free of charge and may be obtained by writing to Young America Films, Inc., 18 East 41st Street, New York 17.

Instructional Films and Filmstrips

Announced by the producers are a number of new instructional films and filmstrips recommended for use in the elementary school. Among the latter which would appear to have value are these:

Language Arts

Pilot to Good English. Designed for grades six through nine, this filmstrip series presents the abstract subjects of sentence structure and parts of speech by means of an analogy to airplanes and flying. Treated in lively, humorous cartoon style, the series treats one of the areas of the English curriculum as exciting, easily-understood material and thus performs a valuable service for elementary teachers. Containing 300 frames in six full-length, color filmstrips, the individual films are entitled: *Learning about Simple Sentences, Verbs—the Motors of Sentences, Verbs and Their Subjects, More About Verbs, Other Words that Help Build Sentences, and How Pronouns Help*. Audio-Visual Division, Popular Science Publishing Company, 353 4th Avenue, New York 10. The series, \$31.50, with guide.

Music

Rhythm Magic. A set of three color filmstrips which provide a simple and entertaining introduction to the time values of the musical notes and rests and their significance in rhythm. The three strips discuss the relative time value of notes and rests, the significance of accents, beats, rhythmical pattern, tied notes, dotted notes, compound time, etc. Recommended for elementary and high school music classes. Young America Films, Inc., 18 East 41st Street, New York 17. \$16.50 per set of three filmstrips.

Science

Animal Stories. Appealing full-color drawings depict delightful animal adventures in a new series of six discussional slidefilms produced by the Jam Handy Organization. Designed for primary children, each film contains the attributes of a good story—a plot leading up to the climax, repetition, action, conflict and suspense.

Titles of the six are: *Rings, the Raccoon; The Lazy Bear Cub; Brush, the Red Squirrel; Mrs. Cackles Becomes a Good Citizen; Hoppy, the Rabbit; and The Adventures of Pete and His Dog.*

The six slidefilms, in a kit box, \$23.40. Individual films, \$4.20. The Jam Handy Organization, 2821 East Grand Boulevard, Detroit 11, Michigan.

Social Studies

Children of Early America. American history, too often taught as a dull chronology, is brought to life in this new series of filmstrips. Designed especially for elementary and junior high school history classes, these YAF filmstrips depict important periods of early American history, portraying each through the eyes of a boy or girl who might have lived during the periods from 1607 through 1855. Each of the 18 full-color filmstrips is an original and exciting story portraying the daily life of the early settlers and the great leaders of a new nation. Teachers and librarians who have seen the first of these subjects have been enthusiastic in their praise, terming them interesting and authentic in every detail. They include such stories as *Washington Invaded*, *Silver Spurs in California*, *Stowaway Around the Horn*, *Rescued by Boone*, *Plymouth Girl* and *San Jacinto Corn*. Young America Films, Inc.

● *Home Life in European Lands and Visits to European Lands.* Made wholly from on-the-spot photographs shot this year in Europe, these two full-color Teach-O-Filmstrips consist entirely of newly-taken photographs by Richard Nelson, noted cameraman, working with scripts by Professor William Hartley, Chairman of the Department of Education, State Teachers' College, Towson, Maryland.

Home Life in European Lands consists of six full-length filmstrips in natural color. It provides excellent continuity on a pupil's level of understanding by weaving pertinent facts of home life, schools, churches, etc., into story frame-work with two actual children from each country in each filmstrip. *Visits to European Lands*, in five full-length color strips, shows occupations, industries, outstanding sights, geographic characteristics, commerce, wartime destruction and present day reconstruction.

Available with each of these series is a fully-illustrated teaching guide packaged with the filmstrips in a permanent file box. *Home Life*, six filmstrips, \$31.50. *Visits*, five strips, \$26.50. For further information, write Audio-Visual Division, Popular Science Publishing Company.

● *Our Flag.* Three full-color filmstrips, designed for elementary and high schools and community groups of all sorts. The three titles in the series are: *History of Our Flag*, *Etiquette of the Flag*, and *Story of Our National Anthem*. Young America Films, Inc. \$16.50 per set of three filmstrips.

New instructional motion pictures, also listed by subject areas, are:

Arithmetic

Decimals Are Easy. By following an inductive plan, this film teaches that decimals are an integral part of our number system. First, they are used as an important element of everyday living. Then, with this background, the film points out the decimals specifically and shows what they mean in terms of the whole decimal system of numbers. Slightly more difficult computations are given at the close of the film, summarizing addition, subtraction, multiplication and division of decimals. Recommended for the intermediate grades and junior high school. One reel, sound, color, \$90.00; or black and white, \$45.00. Educational Collaborator: H. C. Christofferson, Professor of Mathematics, Miami University. Coronet Films, 65 East South Water Street, Chicago 1.

Art

How to Paint. Three instructional films especially designed for beginning painters are included in the *How to Paint* series. Individually titled, they are: *Painting: Learning to Use Your Brush* (1 reel, 16mm sound, \$45.00), *Painting Solid Forms* (1 reel, 16mm sound, \$45.00), and *Painting: Learning to Mix Colors* (½ reel, 16mm sound, color, \$45.00). Based on the popular book, *How to Paint*, by Paul

Hartley and Elsie Ruffini and Harriet Knapp, the latter two well known authorities in the art education field, these films are recommended for all school and community groups, youth and adult, and for group guidance in the beginning techniques in painting. Young America Films, Inc.

Language Arts

William Shakespeare: Background for His Works. In the England of today, this film shows the places of Shakespeare's times and elements of English life that gave the great playwright his language and shaped his character. Kenilworth Castle, Stratford, the River Avon, and the Anne Hathaway Cottage are just a few of the familiar spots that link the past with the present. Then, in fine dramatic treatment, brief episodes are presented from some of the most studied plays: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Merchant of Venice*, and *Hamlet*. Recommended for junior high and above. 1¼ reels, sound, color, \$112.50; black and white, \$56.25. Educational Collaborator: William G. Brink, Professor of Education, Northwestern University. Coronet Films.

Science

Birds Are Interesting. Designed to develop interest in ornithology among young children and to instruct them in the rudimentary differences in various general types of birds is a full-color motion picture released by Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc. Among the birds shown are the emu, penguin, hawk, duck, canary, willet, pelican, chicken, goldfinch, godwit, toucan, and others. One reel, color, \$100.00; rental, \$4.00 for one to three days' use. Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 1150 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois, or EBF regional offices.

● *Sunrise Serenades and Grouse of the Grasslands.* The booming calls and strutting dances of the seldom seen mating ceremonies of grouse are captured in these two full color

versions made by Edgar M. Queeny, president of the board of the Monsanto Chemical company and a specialist in the pictorial study of wildlife, in collaboration with staff members of New York's American Museum of Natural History.

Both films are intended for use in schools, nature study groups, and civic organizations. Prices on request from Encyclopaedia Britannica Films.

● *The Salmon Story.* The saga of the salmon from its beginnings as a fingerling in the upper reaches of the Pacific northwest until its incarceration in a can is explored in this new full color motion picture. Intended for use by home economics, geography and social studies classes, it would also be valuable to fishing firms, packers and distributors of sea food to inform the public of their work. One reel, full color, 16mm. Produced with Dr. Richard Van Cleave, School of Fisheries, University of Michigan, Collaborator. Inquiries should be directed to Encyclopaedia Britannica Films.

Social Studies

How To Build An Igloo. This film is a demonstration of igloo building in the far north, showing how the site is selected and how blocks of snow are used to make a snug shelter against the Arctic cold. One reel, 16mm, sound, \$45.00. Distributed by Young America Films, Inc., in the United States through exclusive arrangements with the National Film Board of Canada.

● *Eskimos.* Subtitled *Winter in Western Alaska*, this film depicts the rigors of an Arctic winter and how human culture has adapted itself to the environment. Intended for use in elementary geography classes, *Eskimos* follows a typical Alaskan Eskimo family through its daily activities of work and play.

Filmed by Fred and Sara Machetanz, both

long residents of Alaska and authorities on Eskimo life. One reel, 16mm, full color, \$100.00. Purchase or rental from Encyclopedia Britannica Films or regional offices.

● *Children of the Alps*. A glimpse into the

picturesque but rugged life of the children who live in the Alps of Switzerland. One reel, black and white, intended for use in middle grade classes in geography, language arts, and social studies. Prices on request from Encyclopaedia Britannica Films.

TESTING READING WITH A BOOK

(Continued from Page 125)

To summarize what the four steps tell:

1. Does the student know the common words he meets in reading?
2. Can the student tell what he has read?
3. Can the student use context to help with unknown words?
4. Can the student sound out new words either by using letters or by using word parts?

These four steps tell what teaching or practice the student requires. They do not give a grade level, but a grade level does not tell us what to teach. Any grade on a formal reading test is, for each individual student, an unknown mixture of all the four things mentioned, as well as others, and must be followed in any case with just this four step test anyway.

The four steps we have described form a very useful and rather adequate test of a student's reading ability and habits. They tell us more, in many ways, than a formal reading test. They can be used in a friendly conference without making the student feel that he is being quizzed or put through an examination. Any teacher can use this

method of "testing reading with a book." Anyone using this test will soon become very expert at using each step and at interpreting what the student does when he reads, how he helps himself, how much he remembers, and so on.

After this "test with a book," the next problem is, of course, how to help the student who fails on one or more of the steps we have given. That is the subject matter of the many books on remedial reading. An adviser may prime himself with the needed suggestions, or he may pass the case along to a teacher who knows what to do. He should pass along with the student, however, a report on the four steps in the test we have described so that the next person will not have to repeat the test but will know how to proceed with help.

This "testing reading with a book" follows the basic principle that the best test of an activity is the activity itself. Standard reading tests have their place, especially in the testing of large groups. But with a single student, the best way to see how he reads is to have him read, using the checks and controls as suggested in our four steps.

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

In the NEA *Journal* for November, 1950 Dr. Mildred Dawson raises the question, *Whither Language Arts?* Pointing out that the field of English is in a state of rapid and continuous change because of our social conditions and research findings, and rightly so, Dr. Dawson brings us up to date on each of the language arts.

The trend in the area of *listening* is notable for the increased stress being placed on it as the major intake aspect of acquiring information. *Oral language* as a whole is being given the stress which it deserves through such activities as allowing pupils to "talk out" topics before they *write*, and by providing other oral opportunities to practice *correct usage*.

According to Dr. Dawson, the language arts contain the materials which hold the curriculum together, no matter what subject area the child is studying: "The children *speak* of their problem and ways of solving it; they *listen* to suggestions of their fellow students and of informed consultants; they *read* in various sources; they *speak* and *listen* to what has been *read*; they *write* notes and reports."

A growth in facility of *oral language* precedes readiness for learning to *read*. A reading sight *vocabulary* must be acquired before a child is ready to *write*.

The chief emphasis in the field of *reading* is in the area of individual differences. Says Prof. Dawson, "While children go through the same sequences in 'almost identical order, their rate of growth varies; therefore, schools are beginning to provide so differentiated a curriculum that each child in a class may be reading at his level of achievement and may progress at the time best suited for him."

In *handwriting*, the sequence most recog-

nized is that the change from lettering to writing should be made in the second semester of the second grade. Many teachers, however, protest that this change to cursory writing retards pupils just when they have begun to express themselves in manuscript writing.

Finally, in *spelling*, research has found that "readiness for learning to *spell* parallels readiness for lessons in word analysis." This usually follows fluent *reading* ability in the first reader.



Foreign Policy and Education, by Kenneth D. Benne and Archibald W. Anderson of the University of Illinois, reprinted in pamphlet form from the October, 1950 issue of *Progressive Education*, is available in limited numbers, without charge. Interested teachers should write to the American Education Fellowship, 34 Main Street, Champaign, Ill.



Science Research Associates have recently released *Helping Children Read Better* (Better Living Booklet Series), by Paul Witty. This illustrated 48-page booklet discusses the importance of reading as an indispensable study tool, as an enriching leisure-time activity, and as a means of increasing personal growth. The author points out specific methods and materials by which parents and teachers can help children read better. Individual chapters discuss: preparing pre-school children to read; reading in the elementary grades; goals for the high school reader; what to do about reading problems; and directing children's reading interests.

Helping Children Read Better may be

¹Mr. Jenkins is an Assistant in English Education in the College of Education at the University of Illinois.

ordered from Science Research Associates, 228 So. Wabash, Chicago 4. Price forty cents.



"Understanding the Remedial Reading Program," by John J. Butler, in the *California Journal of Secondary Education*, October, 1950: The author points out that the remedial reading program draws its members from a school minority marked usually by social, personal, and emotional maladjustment, but with a wide range of intelligence. The members can be "spotted" by deviations from normal in behavior, posture, carelessness in dress and manner, and, in general, by resistance or negativism toward learning, teachers, and peers. For these reasons reading deficiencies are as much an emotional as an academic problem and the first step should be the diagnosis of emotional difficulties and their causes. The need to bring the student from patterns of frustration to patterns of success and self-respect is primary and makes the remedial reading process essentially therapeutic. "The teacher of remedial reading must think primarily in terms of the promotion of the welfare of the individual as an individual rather than solely in terms of the improvement of academic skills... (through) individualization and group socialization... (and) constant encouragement and acceptance..." writes Mr. Butler.



"Who Wants to Read?" by Mary Lins, in the *California Journal of Secondary Education*, October, 1950: The role of the librarian as a part of the *teaching* staff in the public school is receiving increasing attention. More often than not it is the librarian who takes the initiative, for she may first realize that her primary task, the development and stimulation of the reading habit, is also one of the major goals of education.

In her job of encouraging first-hand, intimate contact with reading materials, Miss Lins

has found three methods of encouraging children to become acquainted with books. The first is "book auctions" in which she "sells" exciting books to classes. The second method concerns magazines. A student committee selects ten very interesting magazine articles and advertises them on a bright poster in each classroom. The third method is an "Invitation to Reading" card which is issued to non-readers when they are interviewed by the counselors. The card introduces the student to the librarian as a person who would like to meet an exciting book. A follow-up is made on students who do not come to the library. When they do arrive, they get immediate, friendly service. Miss Lins has found reading guidance fun. She tries to share her pleasure by giving, often for the first time, a student a book which will capture his imagination.



Teachers and librarians may be interested in the American Library Association's 75th anniversary contest. Monetary prizes are to be awarded for the best statements in 2,000 words or less that illustrate the power of books to influence the lives of men and women—young or old. Teachers and librarians who are not 1951 ALA members must join the ALA when submitting their statements. For further information about the contest we suggest writing the ALA at 50 E. Huron, Chicago 11.



Review of Book Sets for Children, a booklet of reviews of book sets which have appeared in *Parents' Magazine*, has recently been released. The *Review* discusses most of the popular book sets such as *Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia*, *Britannica Junior*, *Harvard Classics*, etc., giving size, price, features, and usefulness. Teachers may find the *Review* useful in aiding them in selecting book sets for the classroom library or advising parents on what book sets might be bought for a child's home use.

Teachers interested in securing a copy of *Review of Book Sets for Children* are advised to write to the Parents' Institute, 52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York 17.



Here are the Junior Literary Guild selections for the month of March, 1951:

For boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age: *One Horse Farm*, written and illustrated by Dahlov Ipcar. Doubleday, \$2.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age: *Benjamin Franklin*, written and illustrated by Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire. Doubleday, \$2.50.

For older girls, 12 to 16 years of age: *Margaret*, by Janette Sebring Lowrey. Harper, \$2.50.

For older boys 12 to 16 years of age: *The Wahoo Bobcat*, by Joseph Wharton Lippincott. Lippincott, \$2.50.



The Ideal Supply Company of Chicago is introducing two new games to teach children in third and fourth grades the pronunciation of vowels. One is called the "Quiet Pal Game" which shows the children how the addition of a vowel letter, after another vowel in a word, changes the pronunciation of the first vowel. A hinged flash card with a basic word on the face of it is held up before the pupils by the teacher. After she explains the pronunciation of the vowel in the basic word she turns the end of the card to the front and thus changes the words by adding another vowel. For example, the word "ran" becomes "rain" when the letter "i" is added. The set of 15 flash cards retails for fifty cents.

The second new Ideal game is called the "End-in-E Game" which teaches the changes in pronunciation of vowels that occur when the letter "e" is added at the end of the word. The set of 15 flash cards will retail for fifty cents.



For parents and teachers who are worried about basic instruction in schools today, Dr. Helen Mackintosh reassures us that "We Are Teaching the Three R's" but we do it differently—through applying them to life situations. For example, reading permeates all the activities of the school day. But reading ability cannot be measured by paper and pencil tests. A better way to estimate a child's growth in reading is to ask these questions about him: "Can he read and understand directions for playing a game, for performing a science experiment, for constructing a model plane, for preparing a simple food? . . . Does he have a subscription to a child's magazine and enjoy it?"

Or, let's look at his writing and his arithmetic: "Can he write a thank-you letter for a gift and recognize words that he does not know so the parent can help? . . . Can he set the thermostat according to a verbal direction? . . . Can he make a deposit in his own bank account? Can he figure mileage on a road map?" If he can do and does these and other things like them in and out of school, Dr. Mackintosh assures us he has learned and is learning his three R's. "We Are Teaching the Three R's" appears in the November, 1950 NEA *Journal*.



The Children's Spring Book Festival will be celebrated for the fifteenth year during the week of May 12th to 19th. At that time the New York *Herald Tribune* will again give cash awards of \$200 each to the authors whose books are judged to be the best published during the spring season.

The poster for this year's Festival has been designed by Margot Austin. This poster will be the focal point of book exhibits sponsored by libraries, bookstores, and schools. The poster is black and white with a colored border, about 18 by 24 inches in size. It will be supplied by the New York *Herald Tribune* without charge to those who send postage with their orders to

cover delivery costs. Requests for copies should be sent to Carolyn Coggins, 230 West 41st Street, New York 18. Delivery charges are: twelve cents each for one or two posters; nine cents each for three to ten posters.



School administrators, teachers, and librarians can obtain a variety of supplementary material for use in connection with units of study and programs centered on Latin America and inter-American relations, from the Pan American Union, Washington 6, D. C. Most of the material is in the form of reports and booklets, priced from ten to fifty cents each.

A limited amount of free material is available to teachers and librarians. It is largely limited to bibliographies, directories, and mimeographed memoranda on subjects related to inter-American educational activities and studies.

The Pan American Union welcomes teachers' reports of units, successful programs, and original plays, pageants, and radio scripts, with a view to duplication and free distribution.



Your Key to Understanding World News, a two-part publication, is now available from *Scholastic Magazine* (7 East 12th Street, New York 3). Included is a chart giving population, area, capital city, form of government, heads of state, principal products, and UN status of the nations of the world, as well as maps, articles, and information essential for understanding the world situation. Order from *Scholastic Magazine*. Price twenty cents.



Copies of significant historical documents of the United States are now available in facsimile to schools, libraries, and the public. Among these are copies of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, known as the Bill of Rights, the Oath of Allegiance to the United

States taken by George Washington at Valley Forge in 1778, and certain other documents. A list with prices may be obtained from the Exhibits and Information Officer, National Archives Building, Washington 25, D. C.



The well-known Little Golden Books are being released in full-color filmstrip by Young America Films, Inc., 18 East 41st Street, New York 17. Especially adapted for use in the school's primary reading program, two sets of eight filmstrips have already been announced; \$23.75 per set.



"The general objectives in a course of study in radio and television appreciation are: (1) to broaden and enrich the world in which the student lives by his proper use of radio and television, (2) to form another bond between the pupil's school life and the outside world, (3) to teach the student to employ the radio as a profitable, enjoyable means of using his leisure time, (4) to lead the student to formulate his own standards for radio programs, (5) to help in the formation of intelligent public opinion concerning radio's contribution to American culture and its future possibilities, (6) to increase the student's skill in listening, one of the most important means of language communication, (7) to provide vital occasions for use of such skills as discussion, composition, letter-writing, and reading, (8) to develop critical evaluation of advertising by the individual, (9) to present the history and technicalities of radio as necessary knowledge in this modern world, and (10) to show how the voice may give new meanings to the spoken word and thus have a powerful effect upon our emotions."

—Alice P. Sterner, Chairman, Department of English, Barringer High School, Newark, N.J., in *Audio-Visual Guide*, September, 1950.



What Can I Do Now? by Emily R. Dow is

a simple presentation of innumerable things a young child can do to entertain himself. The book has suggestions for games and handwork to be used indoors or outdoors, alone or in groups, by the child anxious to try something new. Teachers of young children may find it especially useful.

What Can I Do New? may be ordered from Aladdin Books, 554 Madison Ave., New York 22. Price \$1.95.



The 1951 Study Conference of the Association for Childhood Education International will meet in Seattle, Washington, March 26-30. The theme of the conference is "Living with Children in Today's World."

Non-members and members as well of ACEI are invited to attend the conference. Persons interested in attending the conference and desiring further information are invited to write to the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 15th Street, N.W., Washington 5, D. C. Full information about the conference may also be found in the organization's journal, *Childhood Education* for January, 1951.



Children's Books of 1949-50: This list was selected by members of the Department of Work with Children of the Brooklyn Public Library for the NEA and the ALA. It appears in the November, 1950 NEA *Journal*. Books are grouped according to topic, age group, and form of exposition. Brief annotations include a sentence resumé of the story, suitable age level, cost, size, and publisher.



Children's Books for Seventy-Five Cents or Less, prepared by Mabel Altstetter. A list of good classroom books in inexpensive editions. Includes only those that seem most appealing or most useful, that are accurate and authentic

as to fact, and that have story, verse, and picture value. Make-it and things-to-do books are included. Especially useful for teachers with limited classroom budgets. Order from Association for Childhood Education International, 1200 15th Street N.W., Washington. Price fifty cents.



We would like to call teachers' attention to the *American Junior Red Cross News* as a magazine which may have many uses in elementary language arts classes. Each issue contains a variety of stories, plays, poems, anecdotes, and, of course, news of Junior Red Cross activities. The *American Junior Red Cross News* is published by the American National Red Cross. Enrollment of elementary schools in the Junior Red Cross includes a subscription to the *News* on the basis of one copy for each classroom enrolled. Enrollment is for the calendar year. The enrollment fee is fifty cents per room.



The Guide to Teaching Reading in the Elementary School, published by the Minneapolis Public Schools, 1950, has just come to our attention. The *Guide* is a very detailed description of all phases of the reading process. Individual sections discuss (1) Reading in the Educational Program; (2) The Environment for Reading; (3) The Developmental Reading Program (the pre-reading period; the period of introducing reading; the period of growth in independence in reading; and, the period of rapid development of reading power and reading interests); (4) Evaluation of the Reading Program.



Getting Along with Brothers and Sisters, by Frances Ullmann, has just been published by Science Research Associates, in their Life Adjustment Series, in cooperation with the Child Study Association of America. The pamphlet

is based on the fact that friction between brothers and sisters is a common occurrence. In some cases resentment may be deep-rooted; in others, the conflict may be occasional and unimportant. In either case, brother-sister relationships can be improved, through understanding and a desire to get along better. The booklet has been prepared to help them do that. Teachers and parents may find it helpful in aiding young people to establish these relationships which can be so important to future happiness and security.

Getting Along with Brothers and Sisters may be ordered from Science Research Associ-

ates, 228 So. Wabash, Chicago 4. Price forty cents.



The 1950 *Yearbook* of the Educational Press Association of America, just released, lists in 44 classifications 807 educational periodicals, and is useful to people who want to read and write in the field of education. It includes also lists of educational periodicals in other countries around the world. It is available at \$1.00 per copy, from the Educational Press Association of America, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

EXPERIENCES IN SPEAKING

(Continued from Page 129)

Henry, Nelson B., editor, *Teaching Language in the Elementary School. Part II, The Forty-Third Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*. Chicago: The Department of Education, The University of Chicago, 1944.

Note particularly the sections by McKee, Seegers, Smith, and Trabue.

Kallen, Horace M., *The Education of Free Men*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Company, 1949.

Controversial, but stimulating, especially Chapter IV, "The Growing Child as Classroom Pupil."

A valuable brief summary of accepted current thinking in the major areas.

Mayo, Elton, *The Social Problems of an Industrial Civilization*. Boston: Division of Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, 1945. See especially pages 14, 50, 117. The entire book presents the case for the need of communication skills in modern industrial society; it seems provocative and highly significant for education, even more so than the earlier study, *The Human Prob-*

lems of an Industrial Civilization, published in 1933 and reprinted in 1946.

Michaelis, John U., *Social Studies for Children in a Democracy*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1950.

Excellent suggestions for use of communicative techniques in social studies.

Morkovin, B. V. "Growth through Speaking and Listening," *Elementary English* XXVI (March, 1949), 129-131.

Report of the Harvard Committee, *General Education in a Free Society*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1946.

White, Ralph K., "Democratic and Autocratic Group Atmospheres," *Psychological Bulletin*, 1938, 35:694.

An early study of effects of the permissive versus the dominated situation; child growth under these two widely different conditions.

Wilt, Miriam E., "A Study of Teacher Awareness of Listening as a Factor in Elementary Education," *Journal of Educational Research*. XLIII (April, 1950), 626-636.

Review and Criticism

[The brief reviews in this issue are by Elizabeth Guilfoile, Ellen Frogner, William A. Jenkins, Helen C. Bough, Bernadiné G. Schmidt, and La Tourette Stockwell. Unsigned annotations are by the editor.]

For the Teacher

The Language Arts in The Elementary School.

By Ruth G. Strickland. D. C. Heath, 1951.

Written in simple direct style, this book does an excellent job of covering the whole field of the language arts from the child development point of view. Research in child growth and development and in the various aspects of the language arts—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—is skillfully woven into the treatment of every problem whether it concerns the child himself, or the materials and methods of learning.

A discussion of language and learning gives a background for showing the relationship of language to all other growth factors, beginning with the infant and continuing with the child through the intermediate grade age. The teacher who receives the child in kindergarten or first grade can get, especially from the earlier chapters, a better understanding of why a child is as she finds him. She can discover her own real importance in helping every child to grow to his full capacity in expressing his ideas orally. The author points out that, "If he uses speech spontaneously, fluently, and clearly for his age he is growing in a satisfactory manner," and that teachers teach primarily *what* they are, and not necessarily by direct teaching. For the teacher of the nine to eleven-year-old the statement is made that a relaxed, natural, stimulating classroom atmosphere does as much as actual teaching to help the child develop language power. In these years, too, the teacher's own speech is an important influence on the

amount and quality of the older child's oral expression.

There are answers of a practical sort in this volume, answers to questions that teachers often ask. Here research is used as a basis for every answer, when it is available. Otherwise the author gives a common sense answer growing out of her research, her observation, and her experiences with children. A sampling of the types of situations discussed is as follows:

What can the teacher do about such problems as baby talk, slow starters in speaking, handedness, the child with two languages?

What is acceptable oral language from the standpoint of usage?

What is acceptable written expression for the young child? the older child?

What are the vocabulary expectations for children ages two to eleven?

How can children be helped to learn both the skill and the art of listening?

How can the teacher provide for each child as an individual in all aspects of language arts development?

Chapters on stories, books, and reading, and on dramatic interpretation round out the usefulness of the volume.

There are many quotable statements that teachers will be using to reinforce a modern point of view in teaching the language arts as related to the total educational program:

"A reader is not a person who *can* read; a reader is a person who *does* read."

"A language . . . is merely a set of commonly accepted practices and it is successful only in so far as hearers understand speakers and readers understand writers."

"The linguistic level on which an individual operates not only colors but also shapes the contours of his whole life."

"At times it is profitable to examine a skill, discuss it, work on it through direct attack and practice, then fit it back into the total program of use."

"Wise teachers spend as much time as possible on the kind of experiences that provide enrichment, knowing that in so doing they are giving the children the greatest possible help with learning the actual fundamentals, the knowledge and skill which are needed in solving real problems, rather than keeping them struggling to memorize the prescribed methods of solving theoretical and imaginary ones."

The volume on *The Language Arts in the Elementary School* is the most comprehensive and useful treatment of this area of the school program that has yet been made available to the teacher, the principal, the supervisor, or the administrator. The person who can read and digest all the statements of principle, the many illustrations, the research findings, and the interpretations of children's experiences in expression will have enriched his own professional background not only in the language arts but in the total elementary school program as well.

Helen K. Mackintosh

U. S. Office of Education

The American Pronouncing Dictionary of Troublesome Words. By Frank O. Colby. Crowell, \$4.50.

The well-known syndicated writer on American English pronunciation has presented in this volume a useful list of words often mispronounced. His method of reporting speech sounds is accurate and easily intelligible to the lay reader. His data are based on general American usage. The introductory sections are interesting and appear to be linguistically sound.

While his facts are for the most part easily available in good unabridged dictionaries, libraries will find this a useful and convenient reference volume.

Elementary-School Student Teaching. By Raleigh Schorling and Max Wingo. McGraw-Hill, \$3.75.

This beautifully printed and highly pictured text for the student teacher in the elementary school is not too consistent in its treatment of various topics. Some well chosen and helpful materials on Child Growth and Development and on Learning to Understand Children contrast strikingly with the chapter on Planning, which despite its title, "Teacher and Pupils Plan Together" deals almost exclusively with teacher-planning.

Treatment of the topic "The Slow-Learning Child" is impressive in its earnest plea for greater understanding of this child's problems. This section is concrete, realistic, full of vital information drawn directly, apparently, from case studies.

But, in the chapter entitled "A Broader Concept of Method" much more space is given to an academic dialogue-type presentation of "project method" and "activity school" than to illustration of real school programs.

The student observing a modern teacher working democratically with children, employing a great variety of learning situations, would not gain too much help in interpreting what he saw from these chapters.

In brief, the major purpose of the authors to acquaint the student with modern elementary education seems to be incompletely realized. E. G.

For Early Adolescents

Davey Logan, Intern. By Henry Gregor Felsen. Dutton, \$2.50.

The outcome of this story is that Davey Logan refuses a tempting offer to become a medical specialist and chooses instead to be-

come a general practitioner in order to serve more people who are in need. In point of view, a refreshing contribution among career books written for young people. Principally for senior high school students. E. F.

Farmer in the Sky. By Robert A Heinlein. Illustrated by Clifford Geary. Scribner's, \$2.50.

It must be admitted at the start that the effect of this book upon the reviewer has been to make her feel as if she'd been brought up in the Stone Age. For *Farmer in the Sky* is a kind of 1984 for teen agers, except that it goes even farther, because it "blasts" the reader forwards not only into time but into space. Curiously enough, like 1984, it has a noticeable amount of satire which the kids will take or leave depending on whether they read it as many read *Gulliver's Travels*, just for the story, or as sophisticated adolescents who recognize satire when they see it. The action starts on Earth, not as we know it, but as it might be—well, a hundred years from now. Anyway, aviation has progressed to the point where geography classes in California take three-day field trips to the Antarctic. A "space ship," the Mayflower, is about to take off with a group of emigrants from earth who are going to Ganymede, one of Jupiter's moons, to do scientific farming. The story is told by Bill, a teen ager, one of the emigrants. Perhaps the most exciting section of the book is the space ship's flight through "the firmaments of heaven," but the problems of farming on a new planet are equally imaginative and enthralling. Most of the youngsters who read the book probably will never have heard of Milton, but to this prehistoric reviewer, certain lines kept repeating themselves, among them,

"And fast by hanging on a golden Chain
The pendant world, in bigness as a Star
Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon."

Would one dare recommend *Paradise Lost* as collateral reading for *Farmer in the Sky*? !

L. T. S.

Jamestown Adventure. By Olga W. Hall-Quest. Dutton, \$2.50.

As a top-notch adventure story is told the first twelve years of the Jamestown colony. Based on original records this gives a full and fascinating account of the courage, despair, and high-hearted purpose of these first settlers. It is far more than just the story of Captain John Smith and Pocahontas and will be inspiring reading for the 6-8th graders as well as to the advanced student in American history.

H. C. B.

Debbie of the Green Gate. By Helen Fern Daringer. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.50.

The story takes place during the stay of the Pilgrims in Holland just before the journey to America. Interest centers on fifteen-year-old Debbie's responsibilities in keeping house, her pleasures too, and then the plans to set out for the New World. The book is well written. Many junior high school girls should like it, if some of the characteristics of the speech of the Pilgrims do not seem too strange. E. F.

Quest in the Desert. By Roy Chapman Andrews. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. Viking, \$2.50.

This book has everything that boys 12-14 (and some older and younger) would want, exciting adventurous narrative, fascinating factual information, and also what will please their teachers, really good writing. This is Roy Chapman Andrews's first book for boys. A great explorer, for many years president of the American Museum of Natural History, now in retirement, he has written a book for adolescents which reflects both richness of living and extensive literary experience. Although presented as a story, the book is autobiographical, based on Andrews's own experiences in exploring Central Asia. Jack Benton, leader of the American Gobi Desert expedition, really is Andrews, himself. Wolf, the Alsatian shepherd dog, one of the most important characters, is the same Wolf to whose memory Andrews

dedicates the book. Dr. Andrews is not only an archaeologist but also a naturalist and two of the most vivid passages in the book are the accounts of a sudden antelope stampede and an attack by snakes. Dinosaur fossils and prehistoric graves are discovered, too, but the descriptions of Mongolian civilization as it still exists is as interesting as those of archaeological discoveries. A book you can give to your student or your own child without any reservations.

L. T. S.

The Great Houdini. By Beryl Williams and Samuel Epstein. Messner, \$2.75.

A biography for junior and senior high school students who might become interested in a rather prosaically written life of a "magician extraordinary." Not a first choice among biographies for young people.

E. F.

The Winning Dive. By M. G. Bonner. Illustrated by Bob Meyers. Knof, \$2.00.

A camp story with which youngsters who have attended a boy's camp will delight to identify themselves, and those who haven't will enjoy because everything happens the way they will think it ought to.

L. T. S.

Margaret. By Janetta S. Lowrey. Harper, \$2.50.

Margaret, an orphan, was brought up by a warm-hearted woman of limited cultural and monetary means. At fourteen her uncle took her to her father's aristocratic home in the city. In this environment, where more stress is placed on social attainment, she finds it hard to adjust and feels very insecure. Her battle to fit in with the group and yet hold to her ideals and principles makes an absorbing story. It is beautifully written, and its good characterization and sound values recommend it highly. Excellent for retarded readers in high school.

L. G. M.

Shortstop Shadow. By Howard M. Brier. Illustrated by Jay Hyde Barnum. Random House, \$2.50.

A college baseball story centered about the

mystery of a star player falsely accused of playing pro during a summer vacation. Tedious pacing, stock characters, and immature dialogue make this story unrealistic.

L. E. N.

Let 'Em Roll. By Charles M. Daugherty. Illustrated by the author. Viking, \$2.50.

Two main interests—the making of a moving picture and a period in the history of the American West—are skillfully blended in this book for boys. While the informative intention is obvious, situations, characters and development of events are lively enough to make this a good story too. John Brown, who is greatly absorbed in moving picture camera work on his own, has the opportunity to visit his uncle, a moving picture director, in Hollywood and observe a picture being made. He learns not only about the techniques of shooting a picture and the research that precedes it, but also something of the difficulties that may arise between producer who thinks of box office values and the director who is concerned with integrity and artistic standards. The particular picture in process being a semi-documentary about the times of Fremont and Kit Carson, Josh, whose indifference to history in the beginning is as great as his interest in moving making, becomes equally keen in learning about life in the old West. Recommended for older boys.

A. J.

Antonin Dvorak, Composer from Bohemia. By Claire Lee Purdy. Messner, \$2.75.

As is too often true of biographies of composers, the book is divided into two parts: the first, dealing with the childhood of the composer, is anecdotal, highly fictionized, and many legends are included. Then with the adult years of the biography, the style changes, and becomes too frequently cataloging of the works as opus after opus is noted. In addition to this variation in style, the author has chosen to emphasize Czech history to such an extent that the composer is obscured. Dvorak's stay in America is dealt with briefly.

J. G. S.

Hoofbeats On The Trail. By Vivian Breck. Illustrated by Hubert Buel. Doubleday, \$2.50.

A new member of the Sequoia Club, Cress Pomeroy takes to the trail and the mountains of California, in order to find herself. She has been a failure in a family that is college-minded and decisive, and Cress has difficulty in deciding her own future. Just enough love interest added to the riding and pack-trail adventure, gives this teen-age story a certain appeal. Very well written.

F. E. W.

Needle. By Hal Clement. Doubleday, \$1.00.

Labelled science-fiction, this story of the Hunter and his quarry symbiotes from another planet who had to live within the body of another organism—would strain the imagination of the most credulous scientific adolescent.

L. E. N.

Chaim Weizmann, Builder of a Nation: By Rachel Baker. Messner, \$2.75.

Even more than a biography of a great man, this is an account of the abiding faith, the indomitable will, and the courage which go into the realization of a dream. A great scientist and a great political leader, Chaim Weizmann devoted his life to the formation of a Jewish state, and in 1948 he became the first President of Israel.

J. G. S.

For the Middle Grades

We Merrily Put to Sea. By Theodora Du Bois. Doubleday, \$2.50.

Three independent and self-reliant Scott children left in the care of unsympathetic guardians take "French leave" and visit their grandfather. He invites them to sail with him down the Atlantic coast to Florida. He, becoming ill, must abandon the ship. For the benefit of port officials the children invent an uncle and set sail on the inland waterway to meet their grandfather in Florida.

Good adventure and information on coast-wise sailing but question the ethics of the "French leave" and bogus uncle. Similar to

antics of the Walker children in Ransome's *Swallows and Amazons*. Of interest to children in Atlantic coast region.

H. C. B.

Orphans of the Range. By Charles M. Martin. Viking, \$2.00.

A book for intermediate grade pupils who like to read about everyday life on a ranch. Attention centers on thirteen-year-old Jimmy, his dog, his colt, and the Scudder family, who befriend the orphans.

E. F.

Kantchil's Lime Pit. By Harold Courlander. Harcourt, \$2.75.

In this collection of Indonesian folk tales Kantchil, the little mouse deer, sly and self-reliant, is the hero of many stories. Wits are his stock in trade and all the animals of the forest are his victims. A few fables and legends round out the selection and Robert Kane's black and white drawings are in keeping with the text. There is a short introduction to Indonesian folk literature and a chapter of notes on the stories included. The glossary gives pronunciation and meaning of foreign words.

H. C. B.

Mary Lizzie. By Florence Musgrave. Illustrated by Robert Candy. Houghton, \$2.25.

Mary Lizzie was "different" in her homeland Wales because of her red hair. When she and her parents came to America she was "different" in many other ways, and there was much unhappiness before her adjustment began. Perhaps the changes are wrought a little too quickly and the story is sentimental at times, but these considerations are outweighed by fine characterizations, and a swift moving plot. A real contribution to the democracy list and one especially useful in communities where there are many D. P.'s.

H. C. B.

The Shining Shooter. By Marion Renick. Scribner's, \$2.25.

Tip learned how to play marbles masterfully, he learned to think before acting, he found happiness in his friendship with a magician,

and he brought happiness to his mother. As one would conclude, everything ends well, but convincingly. A book that will interest seven to ten year olds. E. F.

Flowers. A Guide to Familiar American Wild-flowers. By Herbert S. Zim and Alexander C. Martin. Illustrated by Rudolf Freund. Simon and Schuster.

A wonderful gift for a kid going away to camp or anyone who is interested in flowers. This is a pocket sized "Golden Book" and one of the handiest and easy to use "flower books" this reviewer has seen: the flowers are arranged in four groups according to color; for example, group one is from red to pink, to magenta; the plants are presented in groups (genera) rather than by kinds (species); range maps are given on every page; there are 134 full color illustrations. A walk through the woods with this book in your hand and you'll return to civilization a much better informed citizen. L. T. S.

Binnie Latches On. By Marie McSwigan. Dutton, \$2.50.

Binnie latched on through publishing her own neighborhood newspaper, the *Hornepiper*. But before that, the author takes us through a few years of life in the Horne family, with the spotlight on Binnie. A book for girls in the intermediate grades. E. F.

Adventures with the Giants. Sellev, Catharine F. Little, Brown, \$2.50.

Easy-to-read and well written retellings of some of the Norse myths and legends. Imaginatively illustrated by Steele Savage. For intermediate and junior high school pupils. E. F.

For Younger Children

Pirates, Ships and Sailors. A Giant Golden Book. By Kathryn and Byron Jackson. Illustrated by Gustaf Tengren. Simon and Schuster, \$2.00.

Children who already love the sea and its romantic stories will find this book very mildly interesting. Those who have not yet come into contact with this fanciful life will think it rather dull stuff after reading these stories. They don't live up to the excellent pictures. With the exception of the "Flying Dutchman," and that only approaches excellence, most of the stories are tame, and a large proportion of them are parentally didactic and will be recognized as such by most children. The poems scattered throughout the book could be more rhythmical. Not recommended.

W. A. J.

The Calf That Flew Away. Story and pictures by Andr  Dugo. Henry Holt, \$2.00.

Molly, the calf, had been warned not to eat the marsh grass but one day when she tasted a blade it was so good she couldn't stop until she was stuffed. Then she began a series of wild and exciting adventures in far away places which end, happily, with Molly safe once again back in her meadow. First and second graders will love Molly's meeting with the owl in mid-air, her sleeping on the church spire, and her rescue by the hook-and-ladder, among other things. Recommended. W. A. J.

Henry Huggins. By Beverly Cleary. Morrow, \$2.00.

Henry Huggins, eight years old, has adventures with guppies, a new dog, a lost football, night crawlers, and green paint. Six, seven, and eight year old boys and girls will easily find themselves in this book in both the events and in the language used. Realism and fun for young children. E. F.

The Great Big Fire Engine Book. A Big Golden Book. Pictures by Tibot Gergely. Simon and Schuster, \$1.00.

Color (red, of course), action, and sound effects—and plenty of all three. Kindergartners and first-graders will love it. For sheer joy, recommended. W. A. J.

Follow the Leader. By Bernice Bryant. Illustrations and calligraphy by Beryl Bailey-Jones. Houghton Mifflin, \$1.25.

Butch learned the hard way that doing things by himself is not as much fun as "following the leader." He is an interesting little boy and most nursery school children will enjoy being read to of his adventures. But the first grader who might pick up the book will be repulsed by the script if he is just learning to read. Not strongly recommended. W. A. J.

If I Ran the Zoo. Written and illustrated by Dr. Seuss. Random House, \$2.00.

If you think ordinary lions, tigers, and elephants can stir young imaginations and conjure up childhood dreams try ten-footed lions, elephant-cats, bustards (who eat only custard with sauce made of mustard), flustards (who only eat mustard with sauce made of custard), joats, lunks, mulligatawnies, iotas, chuggs, and Russian palooskis (whose heads are redski and bellies are blueski) on them. Dr. Seuss at his nonsensical best! W. A. J.

The Two Reds. By Will and Nicholas. Harcourt, \$2.00.

One Red is a boy, the other is a cat. They live on St. Mark's Place in the big city but they don't like each other. One day the boy Red is chased by the Seventh Street Signal Senders and Red the cat is chased by a fishman. Everyone lands in the same pile as they collide. The two Reds escape together and become fast friends. Young readers of this book will become good friends of them also. They won't know why but it will be because of the interesting way the author has introduced them to *The Two Reds* and the excellent and colorful pictures they will have seen of the boy and the cat. W. A. J.

Billy Buys a Dog. By Elizabeth Laing Stewart. Reilly and Lee, \$2.00.

Among books for the youngest children this book is rather unique. It has a vocabulary meticulously geared to the first grade reader, and

it is illustrated with photographs rather than the usual drawings. The effect is a worthwhile book, interesting and appealing story, and, the author has added riddles at the end of the story which will give the reader a chance to test his reading power. Superior typography and excellent format. Strongly recommended.

W. A. J.

Runaway Toys. By Inez Hogan. Dutton, \$1.75.

What happens when a little boy's toys decide to run away, to try their wings—and wheels—and sails!—in the big world outside Joe's window? Told in a lilting meter that couples rhythm and repetition, Inez Hogan's story tells of the plans made by the toys while Joe slept; but how sad were the same toys when they found the big world was made for *big* wings—and *big* wheels—and *big* sails! It's a gay little tale for gay little tots from four to eight years old. B. G. S.

Daffy. By Adda Mai Sharp. Illustrated by Elizabeth Rice. Steck Company, \$1.50.

No animal is more the favorite of the littlest primary children than the circus elephant, and Daffy proves himself to be worthy of that favor. The flavor of the big tent is in the words, in the pictures, and in the gorgeously colored balloons that grace even the end papers.

An ordinary, regular circus is one thing. But when Daffy, the baby elephant, lets the animals out of their cages to put on their version of a circus, things happen—including Daffy's bath in the lemonade.

The book is filled with almost full-page pictures, with the minimum of print which makes fairly easy independent reading by the very beginner. B. G. S.

The New Singing Time. By Satis N. Coleman. Illustrated by Ruth Carroll. John Day, \$2.50.

Spontaneous, free songs for children, presented with piano accompaniment, to be sung with or without children's activities are the frame of the song, including such titles as

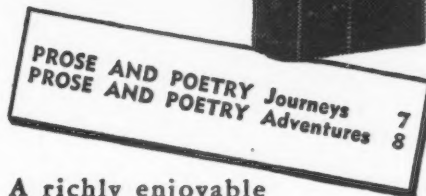
"Making Cookies," "Snowflakes," "Raindrops on the Window," and "A Birthday Song." Provision is made for the children to "add their own," when the gaiety of the tune and rhythm stirs their own creative impulse. Not the least of its charms are the lovely soft but gay illustrations. It's planned for the children from three to eight. B. G. S.

The Wizard of Oz. Adopted by Allen Chaffee. Illustrated by Anton Loeb. Random House, \$1.00.

Children's favorites through the years never grow old, but stay ever new, and *The Wizard of Oz* is no exception. This version is retold for the very young "listener," and is planned more to be read to children than by them. Its mechanical detail, however, is such that the upper primary child can read it for himself. The pictures are colorful and dramatic in their active illustration of the story, a particularly delightful feature for the climbers who "wanta see" while they hear. B. G. S.

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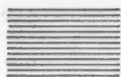
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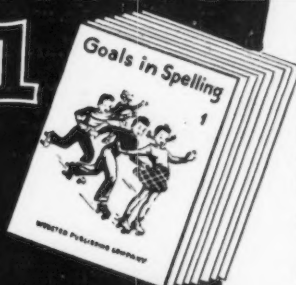
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